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PROBLEMS OF THE PEACE

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# PROBLEMS OF THE PEACE

BY

WILLIAM HARBUTT DAWSON

AUTHOR OF

"THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN GERMANY," "WHAT IS  
WRONG WITH GERMANY?" ETC., ETC.

*"We have made a peace, but it is not the peace."*

LORD CLARENDON in 1856.



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## INTRODUCTION

THE relationship of the reader to the author of a book I conceive to be that of guest to host. If at their first meeting in an Introduction, as on a doorstep, the two are conscious, if not of being in complete sympathy, at least of understanding each other, later intercourse will be easier and agreement more probable. Writing upon subjects in relation to which even the most guarded of us are liable to the danger of feeling strongly rather than thinking deeply, and of forming our conclusions hastily rather than discriminatingly, it seems to me desirable to state plainly in these opening words the standpoint from which I have proceeded and the purposes which I wish to serve, so that the argument of this book may be accepted and judged exactly for what it is intended to be, and for nothing else.

Let me say, in passing, that both in scope and proportions the book has outgrown the limits first proposed. My original idea was to endeavour to throw light (which, indeed, is still sadly needed) merely upon the German aspects of the settlement problem. It soon became clear to me, however, that the problem was one and indivisible, and that to touch it at any point brought one up sooner or later against Germany, either *in propria personâ* or indirectly as the leader and ruling spirit of the Central Powers. Almost to my regret, therefore, I found myself compelled to extend my survey to wider ground than I had intended.

The book is concerned, not with the war itself, but with what is to follow the war, and the assumption which runs through its pages is the imperative need for the success of the Allies and of the causes for which they stand. I am more convinced than ever before that a

“German peace”—a peace, that is, which would allow Germany to emerge from the war with the conviction that she was victorious—would be a curse for Europe and not least for the German nation itself. Nearly three years ago I gave the reason for this belief in the following words, in a book in which I attempted to answer the question, “What is Wrong with Germany?” not knowing then that so many things were wrong, and so very wrong, with that country as events have since proved :

For the German nation in its present mood, did it but know, success would be an infinitely greater misfortune than defeat, since victory would seem to sanctify force and justify the spirit of arrogance and aggression which has led Germany to break treaties, to trample underfoot the rights of small States, and to defy the moral sense of the world. On the other hand, for Europe, Germany’s success would mean a condition of anarchy and moral chaos, followed by a speedy second deluge of blood : for the world at large, the shattering of many of the inspiring hopes and visions which have strengthened the courage and kept alive the faith of the pathfinders of human progress.

To these words I give to-day an adherence even more unquestioning than before. It is to be feared that the mood of Germany three years ago remains substantially unchanged, while in the interval the tale of her misdeeds—military, political, moral—has reached still more appalling proportions. If, however, the world is to become again a clean place, meet for civilized nations to live in, Germany will have to learn by the discipline of force to which she has appealed—the only discipline which she understands—that treaty-breaking, treachery and conspiracy against the peace and concord of other peoples, military aggression, crooked diplomacy, “methods of frightfulness,” arrogant autocracy, and blatant militarism do not pay, and that in the relations of nations nothing does pay in the long run except honour, probity, and fair and honest dealing.

The war having been fought to a decision, however, I plead for a good peace, a peace that shall, like the war itself, be decisive, and that shall also be durable. Read-

ing the incitements to after-war measures of vindictive reprisal and retaliation which are still made day by day in public speeches and writings, I find myself totally unable to enter into the mind of those who can contemplate with any other feelings than those of dread and trepidation the prospect which such a baneful policy would inevitably offer to Europe and the world at large. As an alternative to that policy, these pages oppose a policy of moderation of which the purpose shall be to heal the wounds caused by this awful struggle, to reconcile, if may be, the conflicting interests which, if not the immediate occasion of the catastrophe, were unquestionably a powerful contributory cause, to supplant international division by unity, and so to set Europe and the world on a better, safer, saner path.

The case for moderation has throughout been stated from the British standpoint as I conceive it. If it be objected that there can be no British standpoint distinguishable from the standpoint of the Allies in common, I differ entirely. There was a British standpoint in the settlement of 1815, and in the present war, and above all in the coming peace, the interests of this country and of the Empire are emphatically not in all points identical with those of all our Allies. I am an Englishman first and a European afterwards, and I do not apologize for the avowal. To say that is not to advance the arrogant plea that the peace should be a British peace. It does mean, however, that this country cannot be expected, and should not be asked, to assent to a settlement the whole or a part of which any of the Allied or enemy nations of to-day would have an interest in repudiating at some convenient future date. It means also that this country should adhere with strict fidelity to the spirit of the pledges of unselfish purpose with which it entered the war.

Every writer who speculates upon the future of Europe under the mental stress produced by the emotions and elations of the war is exposed to the temptation to put into circulation a good deal of paper currency which he may be either unwilling or unable to honour in the time of peace. I have honestly endeavoured to view

the territorial problems at issue in their true proportions and relations, and to approach them, as far as is humanly possible, with a mind free from prejudice and preconceptions. These questions are far too momentous, far too complex and delicate, to be discussed in the spirit of passion or faction. It is not heat, but light, and ever more light, that is needed—the light which can alone be thrown upon these questions by facts, knowledge, reason, a sympathy which while generous is also just, complete honesty and candour of judgment, and not least some portion of the historical sense.

To many people who have followed the public discussion of the problems of the settlement during the past three years it must have been a source of mingled amazement and pain to see how lightly and cruelly racial expectations of the most extravagant kind, which can by no possibility be realized, have been encouraged in some quarters. Those who expect from the settlement the removal of all national and racial wrongs, grievances, and inequities, are cherishing a great, if a generous, illusion. The thought is saddening, yet it must be feared that after the settlement not a few races and fragments of races, after telling their tales of woe, will be allowed, like Francesca, to fall back into the old Circle, pitied, indeed, yet neither helped nor comforted. For the Powers which confer in the Peace Congress, if they are wise, will not make it their object to get all they would like, but will be content to get what they can. The statesman who at any time attempts to conduct foreign politics on any other principle than that of give-and-take plays antics with the interests committed to his charge.

If it be said that some of the facts advanced in these pages, and particularly some which belong to the historical statement of the problems discussed, are unpalatable and inopportune, my answer is that facts cannot be circumvented nor history cajoled. If the facts are material, it is the best policy to face them at once, since sooner or later they will have to be faced. It may be objected with greater reason that my prognosis of the settlement seems to show Germany, which has inflicted so much

misfortune upon the world, as coming out of the ordeal far better than she deserves. I readily agree, yet reply that while this is an irony of the situation which we may heartily regret, it is one which, for the reasons which have been given, we may be impotent to avert. I am prepared to endorse everything that may be said of Germany as she has revealed herself during the present war, yet her obliquity does not alter the fact that she remains and will have to be reckoned with even more seriously in the future than in the past. In discussing the terms of the settlement the governing consideration must obviously be, What is good for our own country and for Europe and the world at large? The fact that any measure which passes that test proves to be also to the advantage of any one of the enemy nations should be held not to discredit it but rather to confirm its wisdom. Unless we are prepared to make room again for Germany in the world as restored to peace, I see awaiting this country and the Empire—and that at a time not far distant—difficulties and dangers far transcending any which they have had to face during the past three years. And, meantime, what hope could there be of rest, recuperation, and renewal?

It is of immense and overwhelming importance to realize that the object of the coming settlement will be not the adjustment of a paltry Græco-Turkish frontier dispute, but the delimitation of the boundary line of civilization and the determination of the question whether Germany shall for the future fall within or outside that line—in other words, whether she shall cease or continue to be a menace to the world's tranquillity. Germany alone will not decide that question. The Allies will decide it even more by the attitude which they hold towards her at the settlement and after it.

I do not doubt—it would be dishonouring to the national name to doubt—that the British people, which is behind no other in either magnanimity or political insight, will favour the pursuance of a policy of moderation, and will wish to carry the spirit of accommodation to the utmost practicable limit. At the Congress of Vienna Great Britain played the part of the mediator and

conciliator with conspicuous though ill-requited success. To abdicate that function on the present occasion would be to depart from one of the proudest and worthiest of her traditions. America has declared, through her great President, that she stands for the reconciliation of all the nations, great and small, strong and weak, the oppressed and the oppressors, and that only a settlement which has that end in view will have her countenance and count upon her support. Petty jealousy of our kinsmen across a sea which has ceased for ever to divide is impossible. Yet if there can be no wish that our own country should be the leader of a great movement of pacification, its honour and repute require that it should not be content with the inglorious rôle of follower. The cordial and unselfish co-operation of the Anglo-Saxon nations in that great enterprise would make opposition difficult and failure impossible.

To the ulterior problem of the future organization of the nations for peace I come as an ideo-realist, as an optimist tempered by experience. Here all that I can claim to have done is to have presented a sober statement of facts and a forecast of reasonable possibilities. It would be unwise to anticipate sudden epochal changes, for human progress has never advanced by leaps and bounds, and those who see only in organic development any sure guarantee of stability in social relationships and institutions would not have it otherwise. Nevertheless, one may confidently hope that the time which will follow the war will prove to be one of happy fruitions and fulfilments in many directions. Mankind will seek peace and ensue it as never before ; the efforts and patience of philanthropists of every age will be justified and rewarded, for in desire and purpose we shall all henceforth be pacifists, yet without use of the label. Nor need it be feared that the impressive outburst of idealism which has of late been evoked throughout the world, discovering unknown depths of generosity and pity as well as of moral passion, will soon be exhausted. Rather may we expect that by its aid new life will be given to humanitarian impulses and new impetus to reformative



efforts of many kinds. Of the gains of the war—and how much gain will be needed to counterbalance such great loss!—this may rank, indeed, amongst the fairest and most consoling.

The supreme question, whether the war shall give to the world the priceless boon of a permanent peace, is one for the nations themselves to decide. Such a peace will not come by congresses and treaties, by parliaments and laws, nor yet by measures of disarmament and more moral methods of diplomacy, though all these things may help. It will rather be the effluence of a new idealism, born in sorrow and suffering, the outgrowth of a new and purer sentiment of human fellowship and solidarity. To help forward this consummation will in every country be the task of public opinion, and that opinion will prevail just in proportion as there are brought into play, in the discussion of international relationships, knowledge, reason, sympathy, insight, imagination, all the spiritual influences by which the minds of nations are moulded, their vision enlightened, and their latent aspirations made clear to themselves.

Friends who have read some of these chapters have spoken of their “unexpected moderation.” I wish for no other testimony. May the spirit of moderation be for all of us a faithful measure of our earnest desire for a permanent peace when these years of blight and desolation have passed away!

BECKENHAM, KENT.

*August 1, 1917.*



# PROBLEMS OF THE PEACE

## CHAPTER I

### THE BRITISH STANDPOINT

"It is the end which determines the means."—*Jeremy Bentham.*

"The interests of Great Britain neither require to be asserted with chicanery nor with dexterity—a steady and temperate application of honest principles is her best source of authority."—*Memorandum of the British plenipotentiaries at Langres, headquarters of the Allies, February 2, 1814.*

"We have heard much of late—a great deal too much, I think—of the prestige of England. We used to hear of the character, of the reputation, of the honour of England. I trust that the character, the reputation, and the honour of this country are dear to us all, but if the prestige of England is to be separate from these qualities . . . then I for one have no wish to maintain it."—*Lord John Russell, February, 1857.*

"I wish to make war in order to obtain peace."—*Lord Aberdeen, in the House of Lords, June, 1854.*

"The true patriot is he who seeks the highest welfare of his country and who holds that the real welfare of his country is inseparable from right dealing. He will be jealous for the outward glory, dignity, and interest of the nation, but only so far as they are consistent with justice and honour."—*E. A. Freeman.*

"We are fighting for our national existence, for everything which nations have always held most dear. But we are fighting for something more. We are fighting for the moral forces of humanity. We are fighting for the respect for public law and for the right of public justice which are the foundations of civilization. We are fighting for right against might."—*Mr. Bonar Law, London Guildhall, September 4, 1914.*

SOME words of a very wise and far-seeing British statesman, uttered just sixty years ago, deserve to be written in letters of gold over the portals of every Cabinet Council chamber in Europe at the present time. They are the words applied by the Earl of Clarendon to the Treaty of Paris of March 30, 1856, which followed

the Crimean War—perhaps the most unnecessary, indeterminate, and barren of the larger wars of the nineteenth century: “We have made a peace, but it is not *the* peace.” Clarendon gave as the reason for this reservation the fact that the peace had left so much “in an unsettled state.” Events amply justified his doubts and misgivings. For the Treaty of Paris, far from closing the Oriental question, only widened its range and increased the area of friction. Turkey should have reformed herself, but instead her rule went from bad to worse. Russia recoiled, but only, as Gortchakoff said, in order to recover and strike back again, for the humiliating conditions imposed upon her made it certain that she would acknowledge the agreement to which she had set her hand and seal only so long as necessity or interest should dictate. Lord Palmerston gave the Pontus clauses a lifetime of seven or ten years: they lasted fourteen, and when seven years more had passed Russia and Turkey were again at war, and the Treaty of Paris itself was dead and buried.

We are often told that history never repeats itself. It would be truer to say that history is always repeating itself. Of course, the problems of foreign politics are constantly changing, yet often the change is far more apparent than real, a change of form and aspect more than of substance, of political relations and groupings rather than of the essence of the problems themselves. Strictly limited is the range of action in the drama of world-life. New actors move upon the stage; familiar friends reappear in new parts; new scenes and new properties alternate with the old; yet the *répertoire* of history, while it increases from age to age, can hardly be said to discover any longer situations that are fundamentally different from those which have occupied it in the past. For behind all the recurrent strivings of nations are the identical motives and forces which have governed individuals and peoples in all times—their aspirations and ambitions, amities and enmities, loves and hatreds, emulations and rivalries, loyalties and perfidies, magnanimities and meannesses, the whole gamut of the virtues and

weaknesses which make up the greatness and littleness of human nature.

We have become accustomed to regard the present world-war as unique in history. In its military aspects it stands apart in awful isolation: in its magnitude and horror, its superb heroisms and immeasurable sacrifices, in the perfection of its technique and mechanism, but perhaps most of all in the many illustrations which it has afforded of the prostitution of science and invention to barbarous and fiendish uses. Turning, however, to the political aspects of the war—to the tangle of causes which produced it, the issues which it has raised, and the consequences which may be expected to follow it—what must chiefly impress even the unprofessed student of history are the analogies with earlier events and controversies of European politics which are visible at every step.

Most of all is this the case when our attention is concentrated upon the problems of the settlement. How similar are some of the problems which now confront us to those with which the Congress of Vienna had to deal a century ago! Reverse the positions of France and Prussia, and how many of Castlereagh's utterances apply with singular faithfulness to the situation which exists to-day! Again, the unchanging problem of Turkish rule is with us as before, though the constellation of the Powers is so different from that which existed in 1853 or 1878. How, too, the discussions of territorial changes which are going on at the present time, gathering in intensity as the war spends itself out in a climax of fury, revive memories of the master ideas of Louis Napoleon's Continental policy, like nationality, equilibrium, and compensation, ideas so specious but in practice so hopelessly antinomial, and of his many vain efforts to reconcile the *pensée humanitaire* with the *pensée politique*! And so the analogies might be multiplied almost indefinitely.

It was said by an acute critic of his fellow-men that "we learn from history that we learn nothing from history," and in the lightly spoken words lies an indict-

ment of human short-sightedness and failure not easy to answer. It is just because the words contain so much truth that history is always repeating itself, by the iteration and reiteration of the same old truths, admonitions, and warnings, of which the yea and amen is ever this: "I have told you before, and I tell you again."

Never was it more needful that the lessons of the past should be taken to heart than now, when we stand within measurable distance of a settlement which will be fraught with consequences of incalculable gravity not only for Europe but for mankind at large. Peace has her problems no less redoubtable than war, and the aftermath of political difficulties which the soldiers will leave for the statesmen to grapple with will be such as never exercised human wisdom before. Some months ago a statesman who has earned the profoundest gratitude of his country said to me, "I am not troubling about the war—it is the peace that causes me anxiety." Would that all our statesmen without exception, our politicians and publicists, our journalistic and pulpit moralists, and all others upon whom rests the grave responsibility of influencing public opinion, might be haunted day and night, with no moment of respite, by this anxiety for the future!

For it is the future that matters. The nation, already so cruelly disciplined and hardened by trial and sacrifice, will continue to bear with unflinching fortitude all that the war itself may still have in store for it, if only it can be sure that the "last weird battle in the West" which we believe to be now in progress shall not only close the war, but be the prelude to an era in which history for Europe shall no longer be written in blood and tears. What is really of importance, and now only of importance, is that the contending nations, in atonement for the past, shall bequeath to the coming generations the priceless blessing of a durable concord which they, through blindness, folly, and waywardness, have refused to themselves. That is why the coming settlement must give us not merely a peace, but *the* peace.

There is high Scriptural authority for the maxim that our wisdom should be "first pure, then peaceable," and that maxim, applied to the present situation, I take to mean that we cannot think of parleying with Germany until she has been beaten. It is hard for a lover of peace to say it, but I for one am to-day as profoundly convinced as ever that without, if not the formal victory of the Allies, at least such a decisive turn of the campaign as will convince the German war party and its dupes that the German military monster has found its master, and that the hope of establishing a German hegemony on the Continent is shattered for ever, there will not only be no hope of rest for Europe, but Europe will not be a place worth living in.

Nevertheless, the military issue of the war alone will not determine the future of Europe or give to its stricken peoples a lasting peace. Such a peace can come only as the result of an after-war agreement, and that again will depend almost altogether upon the spirit in which the many and difficult problems of peace are approached and the purposes towards which the efforts and solutions of the messengers of peace are directed. Every nation must here be its own mentor, yet upon ourselves rests in a special degree the urgent duty of bringing to the discussion of these problems a calm and dispassionate judgment, and as far as may be such an attitude of detachment as will enable us to view the questions at issue, since they are questions of universal moment, from a universal standpoint, which means that we must understand and allow for the position of neutral and even enemy nations as well as that of our active Allies. That, truly, is a difficult task, but to accomplish it is to lay the foundation for all later action of a fruitful kind.

People are constantly saying, "Let Germany do this," and "Let Germany do that," as though Germany had in her hand the future of mankind. But Germany alone cannot give to the world an established peace after the war is over: she could not if she were wiped off the map to-morrow. To that end will be needed the efforts and the renunciations of all men and all nations of

good-will, and the first question for the people of these islands to ask themselves is, What is Great Britain going to do in order to inaugurate the golden age which she, in common with the rest of the world, so ardently desires? It is clear that if the Peace Congress is to achieve results which will stand the test of time it will be at the expense of the exaggerated claims and expectations which are to-day being advanced on all hands, and by no means in this country and France more than in Germany. There is truth in the recent words of a well-known German publicist, Professor Hans Delbrück, "Peace will have to be wrung from the Chauvinists on both sides."

Perhaps no duty which rests upon us as individuals and as a nation at the present time is greater and more urgent than the duty of offering determined resistance to the tyranny of phrases, prejudices, and preconceived ideas. Many proposals on the subject of the settlement are being spoken of daily as self-evident which should not be taken for granted without the most rigorous scrutiny and an insistent demand for proof. These measures are described as "axiomatic" by our Cleons of political life, not because they are inherently rational or prudent or just, but because they belong to a certain order of ideas and are the necessary presuppositions of a certain course of action which it is desired, by the constant repetition of the same forcible language, to persuade the nation to endorse as something beyond argument and inevitable. Assume the inevitableness of a given aim, and the measures that lead to it become also inevitable, but the important thing surely is first to be clear about the goal towards which we are moving.

One of the propositions which we are bidden to accept as proven and no longer meet even for discussion is that the war must lead to a fundamental recasting of the map of Europe. The temptation to embrace this assumption is specially insidious. The minds of many, perhaps the majority, of us are moving on lines somewhat like these; "Never has there been so great a war before: never before, therefore, has any war called



for such great changes—political, territorial, economic—as must follow this war.” The idea appears to be that there must be convened a far more arbitrary Congress of Vienna, claiming the power to settle the frontiers of all Europe *de novo* and to create, to all intents and purposes, a new Continent. Let it be admitted frankly that nothing is more natural than this assumption that the world-war should lead to a correspondingly great disturbance of existing territorial conditions. The conclusion may be right or wrong, but if we are to accept it we have at least a right both to assure ourselves that it proceeds from a rational premise, and to demand that the proof of its wisdom and necessity shall be placed beyond dispute. It is certain that important territorial adjustments will have to be made if one of the principal objects for which the Allies are fighting is to be attained—the paramount right of small States and nationalities, in Mr. A. J. Balfour’s words (November 9, 1914), “to develop their own civilization in their own way, following their own ideals, and without interference from any insolent and unauthorized aggressor”; but to concede that does not imply that Europe will have to be made over again, even if such a thing were possible.

Far too great stress is being laid upon the merely repressive and punitive side of the peace stipulations, and it is forgotten that if these stipulations are to have any value whatever for the future they must be pre-eminently curative and preventive. As Bismarck said, when in 1870 he was being instructed by amateur diplomatists how Bavaria might best be forced into the new German Empire, there is “altogether too much ‘must’” in the talk about the peace settlement. We shall do well to put from us the temptation to regard the Congress which will decide the terms of peace as a sort of supreme court of morals, charged with the function of estimating the precise degree of all the wrongs done by the enemy nations and awarding punishment accordingly. The Allied Governments should and will endeavour, if it be in their power, to require all possible amends for these wrongs, whether done to Belgium, Serbia,

or France, yet always subject to the reservation that it has never been the duty, nor has it ever fallen within the capacity of statesmanship, to visit exact penalties upon crimes committed by one nation upon another. When all has been done that is humanly possible, the fact will remain that the ultimate and the severest penalty for national wrong-doing must always be the condemnation of posterity and of history.

It was one of the underlying aims of Bismarck's foreign policy to keep the Great Powers in a relationship which while strained should not be critical; he did not wish them to quarrel outright, but neither did he wish them to be too friendly. Some such thought seems to be in the minds of the advocates of a policy of settlement by coercion. The peace for which they are working is not a complete and permanent peace. Not all the wounds caused by the war are to be healed; one or two sores are to be kept open, chafing, smarting, and festering. Above all, the feud with Germany is to remain an ever-open wound. These political practitioners are asking us to make a pathological experiment of a kind which medical practitioners would reject with derision. For is it not a pitiful sort of quackery that will not allow the suffering body politic to be healed completely and altogether?

To retaliate upon Germany and Austria-Hungary by violent and vindictive measures were to try to cast out devils by the prince of devils. For Great Britain in particular this war is a protest against the very order of ideas to which revenge, retaliation, and violence belong. To imitate the aggressor States, even under the plea of punishment, would be to lower ourselves to their level, and so to weaken that protest incalculably; we should be disowning our own ideals, and abandoning the ground of our appeal to the conscience and moral support of mankind. Punishment? By all means, wherever it is due, and of the proper kind; but in awarding it let us be careful to apply our own moral standards and not those of the enemy. We dare not seek to visit the sins of the fathers upon the third and fourth generations.

To do that were neither reason, nor morality, nor statesmanship.

Lord Palmerston said the last word on the subject of vindictive retaliation during the historical debate on the Don Pacifico case. He was, by all accounts, a despicable fellow, this Portuguese Jew, who had claimed British citizenship (as many an alien still does to-day) in order to evade responsibilities to his own country and to wax fat in a land where there was no past to be faced. Yet Palmerston was willing to give even the devil his due. When Don Pacifico's misdeeds were brought to light the super-patriots of that day were for hounding him to earth and withholding from him even his just rights. Palmerston rebuked their violence and turned the tide in the Jew's favour. "Punish him if you will," he told the House of Commons, "punish him if he is guilty, but do not pursue him as a pariah through life." "For," he added, "the object of punishment is not vengeance on the criminal, but its deterring example to others."

In the clash of warring opinions and conflicting interests it is of importance that the distinctive standpoint of Great Britain in the war should be kept prominently in view, both amongst ourselves and before the eyes of other nations. It is no mere insularity or particularism to assert that such a standpoint exists. Our Allies have their own points of view, and have spared no pains to make them clearly understood. It is the right and duty of this country similarly to assert and reassert the principles for which it stands, lest, too late for escape, it should perchance find itself committed by an attitude of silence and quiescence to the adoption of measures which it may be unable to justify to itself or the world, yet for which, and for all their consequences, it will have to assume full responsibility.

No good purpose could be served by ignoring the fact that the British standpoint is not in all respects identical with the standpoints of the other European Allies. Upon abstract principles the Allies are absolutely at one; they are, for example, in agreement as

to the necessity for the enforcement of treaties, and for the reassertion of the public law of Europe, in their advocacy of the rights of nationalities and subject races, in their resistance to the spirit of aggression of which Belgium and Serbia have been the worst victims, and their determination to overcome once for all the militarist peril which has kept Europe in constant unrest and dread for the greater part of half a century—in relation to all the “ideal” objects, in fact, about which, by a gigantic paradox, a dozen Christian nations are fighting each other to the death.

When, however, we turn from these abstract principles and consider the practical measures upon which the Allied nations count as the outcome of the war, and particularly the advantages which are to accrue to them individually, this unity of aim is seen to exist no longer. France was attacked, wantonly, unjustifiably, outrageously, and she was compelled to defend herself with the last ounce of her strength. In fighting for herself, it is true, she fights for Europe and the world, since hardly any other Continental nation is equally necessary to civilization, but her struggle is essentially a national struggle, a struggle for self-preservation. That she should hope in the event of victory to win back the territory torn from her in 1871 is natural, and the world might think worse instead of better of her were it otherwise. Russia not only fights for the recovery and security of her frontiers, but she is interested in the liberation of the Slavic peoples, and until the later stages of the war she openly stipulated for the transference to her governance of the Poles of Austria and Prussia and the occupation of Constantinople, with the command of the Straits and complete freedom of movement in the Black Sea. Equally is the struggle for Italy and Roumania a struggle for the satisfaction of long-deferred national aspirations.

Great Britain was forced into the war by other considerations. She might, indeed, have remained out had she been willing to expose herself to grave risks at a later date. It could not have been a matter of indif-

ference to her whether France and Russia were conquered or not, for with Germany dominant upon the Continent the British Empire would have had no rest, and sooner or later it would have had to fight even for existence. These considerations were undoubtedly present in the minds of the ruling British statesmen, but they were not the considerations which influenced the nation as a whole, unaccustomed as it is to trouble about foreign politics or to look beyond the events of the moment.

The issues of the war, as they appealed to the nation at large, were from the first exclusively moral issues. Who of the present generation will ever forget the spirit of abhorrence which swept over the country in the early days of August, 1914, when news came that Germany had invaded Belgium, in defiance of solemn treaty obligations and of pledges renewed to the Belgian Government in 1911 and again in 1912, and to the German Imperial Diet, through its Budget Committee, as late as April 29, 1913? If Germany's honour allowed her to break her word, Great Britain's honour required her to keep hers. Active intervention followed as a matter of course, for the choice had come which Lord John Russell anticipated nearly fifty years before. Speaking in the House of Lords in August, 1870, of this very treaty, which France and Prussia, then about to take arms against each other, had undertaken in separate agreements with this country to observe, he declared his assurance that "England would always stand by her treaties," and that "when the choice is between honour and infamy" her Government would "pursue the course of honour, the only one worthy of the British people."

Phlegmatic and unimaginative as it is on the whole, no nation acts more upon instinct than the British nation, and upon questions of conduct and morality its instincts are almost invariably true. Above all, the nation knows by instinct what is the straight line of duty and honour. It may be said, and with truth, that the nation's instincts often lead it into impulsive decisions and illogical actions, in which its reason does not show to advantage; but it is of the nature of duty and honour that they do

not argue, calculate, and count the cost. When in 1850 the Austrian General Haynau, who had taken a leading part in suppressing the Hungarian revolution, visited London, the draymen of Barclay's brewery mobbed and beat him because they had read that he had caused women to be flogged. Lord Palmerston had, of course, to apologize to the Austrian Government, but in private he said, what every other Englishman said, that the draymen had done quite right. The draymen's instinct of chivalry was the same which in 1914 enlisted the enthusiastic support of this country on behalf of Belgium, treacherously invaded by her powerful neighbour. No one asked, Should Great Britain engage in the war?—every one said, She must. No one asked, Will it be safe?—every one said, It is right. No one asked, Is it to our interest?—every one said, It is our duty.

A little nation, numbering only seven and a half millions all told, and known to the majority of Englishmen chiefly by the fact that it inhabited a corner of the Low Country which most travellers to Germany or Central Europe far oftener hastened through than lingered in, had for three-quarters of a century lived its tranquil life under the shadow of a treaty by which Germany (originally Prussia), Great Britain, France, Russia, and Austria jointly pledged their word that its independence should be free from the menace of alien arms, and now Germany had basely broken the bond. That was enough to stir the British spirit as it had never been stirred since the Indian Mutiny—neither by the violence done by Prussia and Austria to Denmark in 1864, nor by Germany's callous treatment of France in the hour of her defeat and helplessness in 1870, nor by the atrocities perpetrated upon the Bulgarians by the Turks in 1876. All these episodes evoked passionate protests in this country, but on no occasion was the moral animus so strong as that which was aroused in August, 1914, by the brutal trampling down of Belgium's chartered rights and freedom on "the tyrant's plea" of necessity.

Then came the official declaration by the Prime Minister of the British attitude, voicing so faithfully the national sentiment. Those who have followed the expositions of the causes of the war given by the German Chancellor during the last three years will know how more than once he has entirely changed his ground. At the first war session of the Imperial Diet the deputies were left with the conviction—for they believed all that was told them—that the struggle was with Russia, and that the Slavic peril was the supreme issue. Since then the guilty enemy has been alternately France and Great Britain, though at the present time Germany's wrath is concentrated upon America. No such doubt has ever existed in this country as to the cause and occasion of its entering into the quarrel. On August 6, 1914, two days after the British Government had served on the Government in Berlin an ultimatum on the question of Belgium amounting to a declaration of war, Mr. Asquith said in the House of Commons :

If I am asked what we are fighting for, I reply in two sentences. In the first place, to fulfil a solemn international obligation, an obligation which, if it had been entered into between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law but of honour, which no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated. I say, secondly, we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering Power.

I do not believe any nation ever entered into a great controversy—and this is one of the greatest history will ever know—with a clearer conscience and a stronger conviction that it is fighting, not for aggression nor for the maintenance even of its own selfish interests, but in defence of principles the maintenance of which is vital to the civilization of the world.

Mr. Asquith's words, which have never been revoked, were promptly adopted by the nation as its mandate to the Government; they became the army's marching orders, and at the same time a pledge to the whole world that in entering the war Great Britain's fight was for

morality and right dealing. To these and other single-minded utterances in the same lofty spirit the nation has since returned again and again as to wells of refreshment, wherein to fortify its courage and renew its energies for further traverse on the long and toilsome road that seems never to end. Only as these words are kept in view and made a test for every new act of national policy will the journey begun so well lead to the right goal.

This, then, is the distinctive British standpoint—and the world knows and will recognize no other—that three years ago we entered the war for the assertion of great principles: the authority of international law, the sanctity of treaties, the right of small States to live their own lives unmolested by powerful and covetous neighbours; and not to conquer territory, to capture markets, to cripple a commercial rival whose competition had become inconvenient, much less to break up enemy empires. Of course, there will be territorial adjustments in the interest of oppressed nationalities and of the freer advance of civilization, for the war cannot leave Europe, or even Asia and Africa, as it found them; there will be indemnities to pay; and the men who by their crimes and brutalities have outraged the moral sense of mankind should receive from a tribunal of the nations the punishment which is their due. But these measures have nothing in common with schemes of indiscriminate annexation and violent political revolution.

War is either just or unjust, moral or immoral, good or unutterably wicked: there is no middle position, no "betwixt-and-between." The present war has appealed to the British nation from the high plane of moral principle, and that is why, in waging it, the nation has been united as, perhaps, never before in its history. Upon none of the three earlier occasions within living memory, when this country was either actively engaged in or was threatened by a great military conflict, did any such solidarity exist. The Crimean War seemed to carry the nation off its feet directly the martial spirit had been aroused, yet to the last there remained a large and influential minority which refused to be convinced of its necessity or wisdom. The



Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8, in which, at a final stage, Great Britain narrowly escaped complicity, would have created a far wider and more serious cleavage. The divisions created by the Boer War of 1899-1902 are a matter of common knowledge, and having fallen into oblivion are best left there. The war clarion of August, 1914, however, rallied to the flag the entire nation and its kinsmen across the seas, and the most remarkable fact of all was the ready response given at home by sections of the population which in the past had on principle been passionately opposed to war as a means of settling international disputes, and whose respect for the soldier—coloured by their ethical attitude towards his profession—was not believed to be of the highest.

Looking back upon those early, unforgettable days, when the British nation revealed itself at its highest and best, who does not still feel that to have lived through them was an experience to be counted amongst the richest of life? It was a people's rising in the fullest sense of the word. In the hour of their country's need there was no asking, Where shall England's armies be found? Three million volunteers at once stood forth and said, "We are the armies!" and braver armies never fought for a good cause. So long as history is written there will be told again and again the inspiring story of how the British people, taken suddenly and unawares in the midst of the absorptions of business, the palaver of politics, and the easy ways of pleasure, forsook these things and sternly bade them wait until a great wrong had been righted and their country had proved to all the world that its word was to be trusted.

That, and no other, was the cause and the motive that sent men like Charles Lister and Rupert Brooke, W. G. Gladstone, T. M. Kettle, and Raymond Asquith to their deaths, and that drew from the factories and workshops of the North tens of thousands of gallant lads, without the culture of these men, maybe, but with all their glowing idealism and splendid chivalry. One of the most impressive war letters which I have read—a letter

not written for the public eye—came from a young factory operative of a little town of my native Yorkshire well known to me, one of two brothers who had enlisted in the first spontaneous rush to the colours. The younger of the two had been killed while rescuing a wounded comrade. Writing to his mother to break the news of her loss, the surviving brother added, "Arthur and I did not enlist because we loved war. We went because it was our duty." How many of the millions of volunteers who flocked to the flag in 1914 and 1915 did it for the sheer love of fighting? It is doubtful whether one in a hundred or a thousand of them could have told where Serajevo is, or had heard the name of Bethmann-Hollweg, but they knew of England's obligation to Belgium, and her obligation was their own.

Why recall these things; for are they not already ancient history? They are recalled in order that we may keep in continual remembrance the professions and purposes with which this nation entered upon the greatest, most glorious, yet most tragic enterprise of its history, and they must be reiterated until in the fulness of time this good war ends in a good peace. Who does not see that Great Britain to-day is pledged before the world as never before to a moral cause, to moral principles, to moral ends, and that to guard against even the semblance of deflection from the straight path of duty must be the constant thought and care of all who hold her name and reputation and honour even higher than their own?

"The struggle is being waged with the tenacity of the old religious wars," wrote a German essayist recently, referring to the vehement movements on the Western front. It is true, for the war is one for the probity and cleanness of national and international life, for the ideals of civilization and the treasured trophies of moral progress. In the belief that the war is in the truest sense a holy war, commonplace men have been transformed into heroes, and humble lives inspired to unexampled sacrifice. Still to-day there are hundreds of thousands of trustful, enduring souls, who have passed through

the worst agonies of sorrow, only to learn that life can be crueller than death, yet whose deepest longing—a longing greater even than that for peace—is that their country will keep unsullied the purity of its first faith and passion, and will be able, right on to the bitter end, however distant it may be, to apply to the mighty enterprise in which it is engaged the words of the great English soldier-statesman of the seventeenth century, “I have been of this mind, I have always been of this mind—if God will not hold it up, let it drop!”

It would be unfair to ignore the fact that the animus behind the demand for retaliatory measures, and even behind the passion with which these measures are advocated, is to a large extent a genuine moral animus. Under the compulsion of generous sympathies nothing is more natural than the disposition to give free play to indignation and anger, and allow these emotions to overwhelm the faculty of sober thought and judgment. Who that has honestly tried during the past three years to “keep the balance true and one’s mind even,” and to resist the ever-present temptation to violent recrimination, is not painfully conscious of the immense difficulty, almost the hopelessness, of the task? But passion, which may be a good servant, is a bad master, and the most ignoble and harmful of passions is the hatred which, even when wearing a moral garb, lies behind so much of the sentiment of retaliation. S.P. Under the influence of hatred a man can neither see straight nor think straight nor act straight. It is not only that the object of hatred is magnified to such outrageous proportions that it fills his thought to the exclusion of everything else, but because of this fatal obsession his entire view of life is confused and distorted. Hatred is also a terrible waste of energy and power, disabling the will, weakening to the moral fibre, and paralysing in its effect upon judgment. No nation could live long under the exhausting tension of vindictive anger. Soon it must in sheer relief, if not from fear of itself, cast away the enemy of its peace, and return to the simple, vital virtues of everyday life, soberness, restraint, kindness, and the charity that covers

the multitude of faults. If hatred and malice are really to be continued, then let us for decency's sake continue fighting; better a thousand times a clean and honest war than an unclean and hypocritical peace.

It is certain that the personal relationships between this country and Germany in particular will for a long time be hostile enough without the additional stimulus to animosity which vindictive measures would give. On both sides the war will leave a terrible legacy of ill-will, for if the conscience of this country has been outraged by the inhumanities of Germany's methods of warfare both on land and sea, the success of our blockade in inflicting suffering upon the German civil population, and undermining the vitality of childhood and the whole nation, has created a bitterness which is very real, though we may not care to give a thought to it. It cannot be too clearly or strongly emphasized, however, that upon the question of personal relationships I have not a word to say, and that my concern is solely the future attitude of this country in its corporate and political capacity. That attitude cannot by any possibility be benevolent, but it should not be, and cannot safely be, an attitude of active and organized antagonism.

Politics is science, not sentiment, and in the discussion of the problems of the settlement, in their way so much more abstruse and far-reaching than the problems of war, it is the clear, cold, white light of reason and wisdom, and not the harsh, red glare of passion, that is needed; and that judgment will advance the cause of peace farthest and serve it best which is freest from personal bias of any kind, whether likes or dislikes, love or hate, sympathy or antipathy. It may be that Germany merits worse treatment than it will ever be within the power or the will of her enemies to award her; she has shown no mercy, and if the demands of rude retributive justice were all we had to think of she would deserve and receive none. But such an admission does not help us in the least. The question which we, with the Allies, have to ask ourselves is not mainly a judicial question. It is this, What treatment of Germany is wisest and

best for us and for her ; how can the punishment which will rightly fall upon her be reconciled with the more important purpose of giving to Europe the prospect of a new and better start in international relationships? Broadly the alternatives are either to put Germany outside the fellowship of nations or to bring her more intimately into that fellowship by inducing her to forsake the ideals and aims which have been shown—as she herself well knows—to alienate her from the rest of the world and from true civilization.

Let us grasp the fact that the nations will bring out of the coming Congress just the peace which they take into it. A writer on the settlement question said recently, "The Allies will be able to do as they like." No statement could be more fallacious and at the same time more mischievous. What sort of a tribunal would that be into which such a temper was taken? From it the warring peoples would assuredly emerge as they entered, "red in tooth and claw," with passions untamed and jealousies unassuaged. A settlement so concluded would be no settlement at all ; the very peace would merely be an armistice, to be used by all parties for preparations for a further and more decisive struggle. When in history did a humiliating treaty of peace, forced upon protesting enemies, prove final or decide anything except the certainty that it would be challenged and again submitted to the arbitrament of arms?

The fate of Alsace-Lorraine is a case in point. By the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 a powerful France wrested Alsace from a sundered and weakened German Empire, to which it had belonged for six hundred years ; yet even when two and a quarter centuries had passed the sore was not healed. The war of 1870 gave to Germany, now reunited, the chance for which she had so long waited of reincorporating the severed territories, and she took it. From the standpoint of victory, the annexation was natural, but as an act of policy it was a measureless blunder, and there were few people out of Germany who did not say so at the time. From that blunder Europe has suffered ever since. To it

must be attributed all the subsequent bitterness between the combatant nations and the fact that for half a century not merely Germany and France but all Europe has been converted into an armed camp. France might never have forgiven defeat, but she would not have fought simply to restore her lost prestige, still less for the return of the indemnity. It was the loss of Alsace-Lorraine that incited the passion for revenge, that made possible the alliance with Russia ardently desired by Thiers and later French statesmen, foreseen and dreaded by Bismarck long before he ceased to be Chancellor, and consummated soon after his resignation, so placing France for the first time in a position so strong that she was able not merely, as Gambetta said, to "think but never speak" of the great act of restitution, but to regard it as a serious promise of the future.

It is a fixed law of international dealings that what is gained by the sword must be maintained by the sword. Human nature will not change after the war to suit our axioms and theories and calculations. The patriotic passions which inspired France from 1870 forward, the thirst for retribution, the determination to avenge humiliation and broken pride, if aroused by injudicious measures of punishment and retaliation, would again prove stronger than our statesmanship and shatter the hope of durable concord. For the sentiment which is behind all these things is rooted in elementary instincts; our very retaliationists are proving it by their own conduct. There are those who will still say, "Retaliate, and damn the consequences!" and think it brave so to do. But it is the weakness of this policy of "damning the consequences" that one set of men breaks the windows, while to another falls the duty of paying the bill. It is our business to protect the future generations; to hand down to our children a legacy of evil and misfortune would be an act of cowardice and a crime.

But there is also the question of ways and means. Crispien relates how when once asked by Bismarck if Italy was "still at loggerheads with the Turk," he replied that the Turk was "the very beast." Bismarck

assented, but added, "Wild beasts must be tamed, and not thrashed." One wonders whether those who to-day so lightly propose to hold in chains one of the strongest and most virile of modern nations have seriously considered the magnitude of the task. In their own Empire alone the Germans form to-day a homogeneous nation of some sixty-four millions, without counting a single Pole, a single French-Alsatian, a single man or woman of non-Teutonic race, and ignoring also the ten million Germans of Austria, whose sympathies would be overwhelmingly on the side of their racial brethren in the North. If we are going to keep in physical subjection such a population, let us at least try to realize the gravity of the enterprise. It is admitted that in order to restrain the giant an army of occupation would be necessary, but no one has told us how large this army would need to be or where the men would come from. The alienist tells us that it takes two or three strong men to hold down a madman. What sort of an army would be needed to hold down a proud nation of such proportions, writhing under humiliation and maddened by rage?

Germany had to leave in France in 1871 an army of occupation to enforce by its presence the due payment of the war indemnity. This army diminished as department after department was evacuated in proportion as the debt was paid, but it began at the huge figure of half a million. Let it be remembered also that France was an utterly defeated nation; almost the fight had been beaten out of her; half of her soldiers had been prisoners in the enemy's country and had returned home disarmed; and her military system had failed and fallen to pieces, so that combined resistance of any kind was no longer possible. It is, humanly speaking, inconceivable that Germany will be reduced to such a condition, however long the war may continue. The armistice which will prelude peace, whenever and however it comes, will find the manhood of the nation still armed cap-à-pie. Assume even, by a bold flight of imagination, that Germany should be forcibly demobilized

and disarmed ; what power on earth would succeed in keeping her millions of trained men permanently in subjection?

Not all the advocates of extreme measures of restraint against Germany, however, cherish illusions as to their ultimate effect. Many of them know, and are candid enough to acknowledge, that in the end the victim would be sure to break his chains, but they are willing to take risks which appear to be more or less remote if only the desire for revenge can be gratified, trusting that in the meantime new developments, new situations, a new conjunction of events will arise, averting the catastrophe which otherwise they know would be inevitable. These spokesmen of the policy of repression at any price are for the most part men whose patriotism is just as real and ardent as that of the friends of moderation, though it leads them to conclusions which to the latter seem utterly fallacious and dangerous. They will not see, or will not believe, that such a peace as they would impose on Germany, if they had the power, would, in effect, be a new declaration of war, a war not indeed immediate, for that would be impossible, yet nevertheless as inevitable as death and doom.

For that war the nations would need to equip themselves year by year, month by month, and day by day. The anticipation of it would be Europe's and the world's obsession. To preparations for war every thought, every activity, every development of science and invention, every calculation of statesmanship, every act of policy would be necessarily and entirely subserved. Mankind would live in dread of the morrow ; there would be no sense of security ; confidence between nations would be impossible. The peoples' substance would be wasted and their skill prostituted to vicious ends ; producing wealth with the knowledge that it was intended for destruction, the spirit of enterprise would everywhere be sapped, for no man will build in order to pull down again ; commercial energy would languish ; the whole structure of international exchange would be shattered. The enmities between the late



belligerent nations would not merely continue, but be accentuated ; to the Frenchman and Englishman the German, to the German the Frenchman and Englishman, would be potential antagonists of to-morrow ; poisoned by suspicion and hatred, the very souls of the nations would be perverted and brutalized. In every country subject to this menace of future war internal progress would be checked ; social reforms would cease ; hideous evils would continue to fester, eating out the very vital strength needed for the coming ordeal. Which of the suffering nations of to-day would be able to recover strength in such conditions ? What sort of races would be bred in an atmosphere so unhealthy, demoralizing and evil ?

And political and material considerations apart, does any one believe that measures of revenge would commend themselves to the better feelings of the British people ? " Great nations may be proud, and even vain, but they are ever magnanimous. Generosity is the invariable attribute of the great masses of men." So said one of the most English of Englishmen, Richard Cobden, and for his countrymen the tribute is true. The democracy of Great Britain and the Dominions across the sea responded almost as one man to the cry which was for the liberation of a small, gallant, and friendly nation whose independence had been treacherously outraged by its powerful neighbour. Would it give the same response if asked to keep its heel upon the neck of a beaten foe ? The chivalry which is instinctive in the British character, and which is perhaps never so impressive as when shown in illogical and erratic ways, is an answer to the question. The danger is not, however, that the nation will deliberately endorse any policy of retaliation, by which the spirit of war would be carried into the time of peace, but rather that, not by its own will, but owing to accident, supineness, and inertia, it may be committed to such a policy unknowingly.

There are many people still living who will recall how at the time of the Indian Mutiny the selfsame cry for vengeance, summary and relentless, was raised by those

who for the moment had the ear of the public, and how a noble woman, to whom every sorrow of her people brought a responsive pang, raised her voice in earnest protest. Canning had written to Queen Victoria from India (September 25, 1857)—and how well some of his words fit the present hour—deploring the spirit of revenge that was poisoning the public mind there.

There is a rabid and indiscriminate vindictiveness abroad (he said) even amongst many who ought to set a better example, and it is impossible to contemplate it without a feeling of shame for one's countrymen. . . . To those whose hearts have been torn by the foul barbarities inflicted upon those dear to them, any degree of bitterness against the natives may be excused. No man will dare to judge them for it. But the cry is raised loudest by those who have been sitting quietly in their homes from the beginning, and have suffered little from the convulsions around them, unless it be in pocket. It is to be feared that the feeling of exasperation will be a great impediment in the way of restoring tranquillity and good order, even after signal retribution shall have been deliberately measured out to all chief offenders.

To this despatch the Queen replied on November 1st :

Lord Canning will easily believe how entirely the Queen shares his feelings of sorrow and indignation at the unchristian spirit shown, alas! also to a great extent here by the public, towards Indians in general and towards Sepoys without discrimination. It is, however, not likely to last, and comes from the horror produced by the unspeakable atrocities perpetrated against the innocent women and children, which makes one's blood run cold and one's heart bleed! For the perpetrators of these awful horrors no punishment can be severe enough, and sad as it is, stern justice must be dealt out to all the guilty! But . . . the nation at large . . . the peaceable inhabitants . . . should know that there is no hatred to a brown-skin—none, but the greatest wish on the Queen's part to see them happy, contented, and flourishing.

Still the voice speaks to us out of the shades.

Assuming that the issue of the war will allow the

Allies to dictate terms of peace to the enemy nations, it is clear, therefore, that they will have to choose between alternatives of which not only the measures involved but the very spirit and purpose will be fundamentally different. The alternative to a policy of stern retribution and repression is one which would require both of Germany and Austria-Hungary full amends and penalties for their crimes, and most of all for the wrong and injury which they have inflicted upon innocent States and nations, but beyond this would aim at punishing the known malefactors rather than the misled, befooled, and driven peoples. It is a peace settlement which would confine territorial changes—and they would be important—strictly within the limits imposed by the just claims of nationality and civilization, due regard being paid to present conditions as well as the facts of ancient history, and which at every step would be determined by the paramount aim of giving to all Europe, and not merely a part of it, a chance of settling down under conditions which should not encourage arrogance and defiance on the one hand or leave behind feelings of humiliation and resentment on the other.

In a word, after we have beaten our enemies well, let us then treat them well! That policy has always succeeded, while the opposite policy has always proved a melancholy failure. The great European peace settlements of the past century prove this beyond possibility of cavil. Moderation and conciliation were the motives which guided the statesmen who apportioned to France her treatment in 1815 and which underlay the Peace of Prague of 1866 and the Peace of Vereeniging of 1902, and in each case how completely was this policy justified by the results! The Peace of Paris of 1856 and the Peace of Frankfort of 1871 were dictated by a spirit of rancour and retaliation, and as the seed was so also was the fruit.

“It is not our business to collect trophies,” wrote Castlereagh to Liverpool on August 17, 1815, in reference to Great Britain’s part in the Congress of Vienna, “but to try to bring back the world to peaceful habits”;

and he added words which, *mutatis mutandis*, have singular pertinence to the case of Germany and Austria-Hungary in the present day :

I do not believe this to be compatible with any attempt now materially and permanently to affect the territorial character of France as settled by the Peace of Paris, neither do I think it a clear case (if we can, by imposing a strait-waistcoat upon that Power for a number of years, restore her ordinary habits), and weighing the astonishing growth of other States in latter times, and especially of Russia, that France, even with her existing dimensions, may not be found a useful, rather than a dangerous, member of the European system.

The enemy countries will experience enough of the strait-jacket in meeting the heavy indemnities which will have to be exacted from them for the grievous wrong done by the one to Belgium and France and by the other to Serbia, apart from the pressure of their internal difficulties and necessities. To attempt to restrain them still further by some of the shallow devices of retaliation which are put forward in the name of policy and morality would prove indeed that we have learned nothing from history and that European statesmanship is to-day poorer in ideas and weaker in resource than a century ago. Such counsels are counsels not of wisdom, or strength, or hope, but of blindness, impotence, and despair.

A peace which is to prove durable cannot omit to regard the European situation from all sides. It must endeavour, as far as possible, to remove past causes of friction and discord, to relieve menace and pressure, and to abate rivalries and jealousies wherever they have existed hitherto. What it must not do is to supplant one ascendancy by another, so creating again the very unrest and suspicion which have been such powerful factors in promoting the present catastrophe. No such intention exists, but there is at least a danger that it may be the effect of unpremeditated action. If it is to achieve any solid results, the Peace Congress must be something more than a camarilla of rival factions,

one of the victors and the other of the vanquished, each with its body of sympathizers. To the thorny problems which will have to be faced—problems which will far transcend the usual substance of peace negotiations—the Powers will need to come not as rivals, concerned more to get than to give, each striving for its own advantage, but rather inspired with a common desire to contribute to the fullest extent, if necessary at sacrifice of *amour-propre* and even of interest, to the order of Europe and the happiness of mankind.

If the Powers, both our friends and our enemies, negotiate in this spirit, who can doubt that the new Europe which will emerge from the present war will be less a Europe reconstituted by some wholesale revision of frontiers than one purged of false and obsolete political traditions and conceptions, which, however useful they may have been for the statecraft and diplomacy of the past, do not accord with the interests or even reflect the public morality of the present day—the doctrine of equilibrium and balance of power, the passion for alliances and counter-alliances, and political groupings of all kinds, the menace of secret diplomacy and secret treaties, by which nations are bound without their assent or even knowledge to indefinite liabilities, and the grossest of all superstitions, the idea that large standing armies are a necessity of national security and a bulwark of peace? That is the new Europe which is needed by the world to-day, and most of all by the still young Anglo-Saxon communities of the Western hemisphere, which have been dragged into war because a quarrelsome old Continent, hitherto too obstinate in its age either to learn wisdom or unlearn folly, has not yet discovered a better way of adjusting its disputes than that of primitive savagery. A peace which will so recreate Europe will stand of itself, needing neither armies nor navies to support it; as Napoleon said of a peace that was to end one of his own many wars, it will be "its own guarantee."

Those who accept this view of the peace settlement do so from no sympathy with Germany or Austria-

Hungary, and from no desire that these countries should escape the due reward of their crimes, but rather from the longing to see Europe and mankind emancipate themselves, by a great act of moral self-conquest, from the dominion of just the very ideas which we associate in particular with Germany and her statesmanship—conquest, aggression, power, mastery, and the crude instincts which feed them—greed, envy, and sordid egoism.

Above all, they are influenced by the desire that Great Britain shall come out of the war not only with the assurance of peace and security for homeland and empire for all future time, but faithful both to the letter and the spirit of the pledges with which she gave herself to this greatest struggle of history. When Germany began to hurl her bombs upon the churches, hospitals, and humble homes of England's undefended towns the cry arose for reprisals—reprisals in her own foul coin—and who did not in his heart sympathize with the desire for merciless retribution? If England refrained, it was not for Germany's sake, but for her own.<sup>1</sup> If when the terms of peace are settled the Allied Powers show a like restraint, they will be prompted not by any thought of what may be due to their enemies, but by the thought of what is due to themselves and the causes of which, in the eyes of the world, they are the trustees. Civilization, morality, and the higher ideals of society will be extended, and their dominion be made more secure, if then, putting away the temptation to vindictiveness and revenge, they decide to show to the enemy Powers the mercy which those Powers refused to smaller nations.

The choice which Great Britain had to make just a century ago will have to be made again. Then this country was the ally of Prussia, Austria, and Russia against France, but the interests of all the Powers were at variance. Willing to go as far as equity and prudence allowed with each of them, and to put in the background her own claims to compensation if by so doing she might

<sup>1</sup> The words were written before the air raid upon Freiburg.

better serve the interests of peace, Great Britain nevertheless refused to be responsible for any measures in which she had no direct concern. "I agree with you," wrote Castlereagh to Liverpool on August 17, 1815, "that our interests are with Austria and Prussia rather than with Russia. But we must be careful not to commit ourselves to a course of policy in common with them in which Great Britain has no interest." The guiding aim of British policy at that time was to bring about an agreement which would settle Europe, and offer hostages for a stable peace. Both Castlereagh and Wellington were opposed to a policy of exasperation against France, and wished to treat her generously, convinced that to drive the French nation into resentment would imperil the hardly-won peace and play again the game of revolution. All they wanted was that France should see the error of her ways, and return to peaceful pursuits. "Though public opinion at home," writes a historian of the period, "and even Liverpool and certain members of the Cabinet urged a policy of dismemberment, both Castlereagh and Wellington realized the folly of driving France to desperation or of forcing her to make sacrifices which would have rendered a renewal of the war inevitable so soon as she had regained her strength."<sup>1</sup> France was not dismembered, but was allowed to retain the diminished frontiers of 1790, and for a hundred years Europe was saved from the menace of a second despotism.

While the Congress of Vienna was sitting in 1815 Lord Liverpool had to write of English public opinion regarding it, "Very few persons give themselves any concern with what is passing in Vienna except so far as it is connected with expense."<sup>2</sup> How will it be possible to prevent the nation at large from holding the same disastrous attitude towards the far more momentous Congress which will follow the present war? Only by persistently instructing it beforehand as to the incalculable importance of the issues which will have to be

<sup>1</sup> W. A. Phillips, "The Confederation of Europe," p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of January 16, 1815.

decided, and the opportunities for doing that with success are fast coming to a close. No one who has followed German politics closely can doubt that long before July, 1914, the party of militarism and aggression in Berlin had succeeded, by persistent and unwearied pressure upon the Government and the public mind, in creating an atmosphere of war and a conviction of its inevitableness which made the actual outbreak of hostilities merely a question of time and occasion. It is just as true that the spirit and even the stipulations of the future peace are now being determined by the attitude of mind of the nations involved, even more than by the discussions of Governments and the speculations of diplomats.

The time has come, therefore, for those who, while convinced that the war must be fought out to the bitter end, are resolutely determined that, when the issue has once been decided, they will not face the future with hatred and rancour in their hearts, or lend their influence to any measures conceived in that spirit on the one side or likely to engender it on the other, to speak out with clear and unmistakable voice. If it is right that extreme views should be kept before the public, it is also of immense importance that these views should be counterbalanced and corrected by the counsels of moderation and prudence. It is not well that the impression should be created, either at home or abroad, that because the British nation has not formally disowned the policies of retaliation and vengeance of which so much has been written and said, it has therefore formally endorsed them.

The appeal is to the soberer thought and suaver temper of that patient, moderate, discriminating section of public opinion, always hesitant, reserved, and distrustful of itself, which yet, in most of our great national controversies, has in the end asserted itself, overcome the counsels of extravagance and violence, and ever and ever again has been justified of its works. Here is offered a unique opportunity for our politicians to show that they are something more than politicians—that they are statesmen; for our Liberals to prove that they understand and really



believe in the principles which they profess ; for our Conservatives to assert their distrust of revolutionary ideas ; for our philosophers and moralists to translate their wisdom into terms of practical politics ; for all of us to prove to the world, by putting in the background the thought of selfish national interest and advantage, how much more we love peace than profit and mankind than ourselves.

## CHAPTER II

### THE POLICY OF RETALIATION

"The enemy is in my view a source of danger much less to be dreaded than what arises among ourselves."—*Lord Aberdeen to Castlereagh, February, 25, 1814.*

"There are two things we confound when we talk of intervention in foreign affairs. The intervention is easy enough, but the power to accomplish the object is another thing. You must take possession of another country in order to impress your policy upon it, and that becomes tyranny of another sort."—*Richard Cobden, November 24, 1863.*

"If the Austrian Government listens to passion, resentment, and political prejudice, they will enlist against them every generous and just mind in the civilized world."—*Letter of Lord Palmerston to Lord Ponsonby, August 22, 1849, appealing for magnanimity towards Hungary after the rising of 1848.*

"I think that the great body of the population of that country ought to know that there is for them a future of hope. I think we ought to temper justice with mercy—justice the most severe with mercy the most indulgent."—*Mr. Disraeli's speech in the House of Commons condemning a policy of revenge after the Indian Mutiny, July 27, 1857.*

"Trade cannot, will not, be forced: let other nations prohibit it by what severity they please, interest will prevail; they may embarrass their own trade, but cannot hurt a nation whose trade is free, so much as themselves."—*Sir Matthew Decker.*

"Man has contrived, not only by sanguinary wars, but by the poison of commercial duties and vexatious prohibitions in time of peace, to bar the intercourse between nations. It belongs to benevolent humanity and friendly policy to find a remedy for these evils, to make the commandment 'to fill the world' the source of new blessings, and forge a chain of love which shall unite all the races of mankind."—*John Earl Russell, "Recollections and Suggestions," p. 249.*

IN order the better to understand how irreconcilable are the standpoints, on the one hand, of the advocates of a policy of retaliation and, on the other hand, of those who look for release from the existing political *impasse* in Europe to a policy of all-round accommodation, which

shall "clean the slate," and give to the nations a fresh start, it seems necessary to recall some of the measures which are intended to give effect to the first of these policies. It is desirable to do this for the further reason that the policy of retaliation will not be overcome by mere argument or even by moral appeal: the best answer that can be given to it is to follow it into practice and show that the hard facts of the situation—the "chiels that winna ding"—are opposed to it and will effectually block the way.

Differing greatly in the objects which they have in view, the friends of retaliation may be classed in one of two groups, according as their proposals are mainly of an economic or a political order, and it is characteristic of the looseness of thought which prevails amongst the retaliationists that the proposals urged by some of them are entirely at variance with those urged by others. The following appear to be the measures most in favour: the references have been gathered from various sources, and all of them have been backed by men of greater or less prominence in public life:

#### A. *Economic Retaliation.*

- (1) The trade boycott of the Central Powers by the Allied nations.
- (2) The compulsory enforcement of free trade in Germany.
- (3) The conversion of the Rhine into an open waterway for all nations.
- (4) The internationalization of the Kiel Canal (a measure at least more sensible than an alternative proposal, which is that it should be filled up).
- (5) The imposition of an indemnity which will "keep the German nation working for the Allied countries for a generation."

#### B. *Political Retaliation.*

- (1) The dismemberment of Prussia by the liberation from the monarchy of the States and territories which were incorporated in 1866.
- (2) The dissolution of the German Empire, irrespective of the wishes of the federated States.

- (3) The dethronement of the Hohenzollerns.
- (4) The complete restoration of Alsace-Lorraine to France.
- (5) The detachment from Prussia and Austria of their Polish districts and their absorption in a Polish State to be formed under Russian suzerainty.
- (6) The dissolution of the Habsburg Empire, which should "cease to exist."
- (7) The return of Schleswig and Holstein to Denmark.
- (8) The division of Germany's colonies amongst the Allies.
- (9) The partition or alternatively the sinking of the German Navy.
- (10) The retrocession of Heligoland to Great Britain (though Germany in 1890 paid in African territory what was regarded as a fair price for this present citadel of her naval strength).
- (11) The disarming of the German nation.
- (12) Finally, it is recognized that in order to the enforcement of some of these measures, an army of occupation would have to be quartered on the German nation for an indefinite period.

Perhaps it will be said of most of the measures enumerated that they are too extravagant to deserve serious consideration. The mischief is that while they may not deserve such consideration, they nevertheless have received and are receiving it. Some of the most fantastic of them have been advocated by men with an acknowledged position in the political world. All, however, proceed from the assumption that it will be both the duty and the interest of the Allies to inflict upon the enemy nations, if they can, the utmost possible injury, and that the settlement made in that spirit would give to Europe a durable peace.

It is true that in Germany equally wild proposals of conquest, annexation, tribute, and humiliation have been made by prominent political and economic leaders and groups, and up to a recent date were part of the daily polemic of an unbridled and libertine Press, which has ever compensated for docility in its attitude towards the

Governments at home by truculence against Governments abroad. That fact, however, only proves that in each country the party of moderation has before it a task of great difficulty if the public mind is to be prevented from going hopelessly astray. And if German writers, with some very notable exceptions, are prolific in predatory schemes, that is no reason why we should imitate them. It is just the predatory instinct in the men who direct German foreign policy that the Allies are fighting. To condemn it in the enemy and excuse it in ourselves is not the best way of convincing the rest of the world that our motives in waging the war are lofty and disinterested.

The advocates of economic measures of retaliation have Germany specially in mind, and they include, as we have seen, both those who would force upon that country free trade against its will and those who would not trade with it at all. They are, however, in full agreement in the purpose in view, which is to cripple Germany materially, in the belief that her military power would thereby be so weakened that she would be unable for a long time to engage in aggressive designs against her neighbours. The idea most in favour would appear to be that of a commercial boycott: the Allied countries are to abstain altogether or partially from either buying goods from or selling goods to Germany for a specified period after the war. In effect the first result of a conflict of which some of the predisposing causes, as is now freely admitted, lay in industrial and commercial rivalries, would thus be a bitter economic struggle. The opponents of such a measure of commercial retaliation reply that no country of advanced civilization can altogether do without the products of other countries, and that even a partial restriction of the exchange of commodities between nations—as we are feeling every day and hour at the present time—must be attended by great inconvenience, sacrifice, and even privation. Even if the prohibition of direct trade with the Central Powers were practicable, it would be impossible, unless the Allies were prepared to carry on an economic war with half the world, to prevent an exchange of merchandise going

on indirectly, through neutral channels ; and the old principle "*Qui facit per alios facit per se*" would apply here with special force. The very theory of international exchange is opposed to the assumption that any country, much less a group of countries, can cut itself off from the rest of the world. Great Britain, France, Russia or Italy, in buying goods from or selling goods to Holland, Denmark, Sweden, or Switzerland after the war would be trading with Germany indirectly, the fact being that any such transaction is merged in a larger exchange of commodities and credit of which the individual merchant sees only a small part.

But whether an effective trade boycott were practicable or not, the decisive question is, Would the Allied nations themselves, or even the trading classes of these nations, be willing to pay the price? As a simple weapon of commercial warfare even a tariff of the ordinary kind is a device of questionable efficiency ; far from being an arm of precision, it is at best a cumbersome blunderbuss, with an ugly kick and an evil way of dispersing its shot indiscriminately. It is far worse with a trade boycott, of which the object is not merely to regulate or restrict imports, but to destroy foreign trade altogether. Such a measure, to the extent that it succeeded, might inflict far greater harm upon the Allied nations than the enemy nations which are to be punished. The extent of the trade disturbance which would be caused by an effectual boycott of the Central Powers may be judged by the fact that in 1912 the aggregate commercial exchange (imports and exports) between the four principal Allied States, Great Britain, France, Russia, and Italy, on the one hand, and Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria on the other hand, approximated £500,000,000. The trade of Germany alone with the four Allied countries named represented in 1913 an aggregate turnover of £335,000,000—a third of her entire foreign trade—of which £160,000,000 were imports and £175,000,000 exports. In the foregoing figures no account is taken of the trade done by the colonies and dependencies of these two groups of States. It may be noted, however,

that the trade between the British dominions and dependencies and Germany alone in 1913 was little less than £90,000,000, and that if the boycott were extended to the colonial territories of the Allies generally, Germany would be almost entirely deprived of her supplies of vegetable oils of various kinds, so indispensable for industrial purposes.

It needs considerable faith to believe that the British traders who in 1913 sold to Germany nearly £44,000,000 worth of goods and brought back goods to the value of £72,000,000—a large part of the latter being raw materials and unfinished goods needed by our own industries—would be willing to forgo this trade without some strong presumption that it would be made good to them elsewhere. But where would the compensation be found? The advocates of a trade boycott reply, "Of course, the Allies will make up to one another all losses." But in commerce nothing happens of course. Even supposing that Germany were entirely cut out of the Allies' markets, it is obvious that the restriction of competition would benefit neutral countries quite as much as, and in some cases far more than, Great Britain. Moreover, much of the trade of the Allies Great Britain could not take over even if she would. Every country buys the goods which it most needs, and sells those which it can best produce. However much our Allies may be favourable to a policy of mutual trading, it cannot be expected that because France, Russia, and Italy are in need of certain goods which Great Britain cannot, advantageously or at all, supply to them, they will be considerate enough to take other goods instead. But a large part of the purchases of our Allies from Germany have consisted of goods of that kind, and this part of the boycotted trade with the enemy would obviously pass by us. It is only necessary to mention such articles as dyeing stuffs, potash and certain manufactured chemicals, electrical machinery of various kinds, glass, sugar, and to some extent wool, books, corn, flour, and other agricultural produce, and even coal and coke.

When we consider the exports of the Allied countries to Germany the difficulties are seen to be still more serious. Take Russia only. If she is not to sell to Germany her huge surplus stocks of corn and timber, eggs and flax, hides and skins, who is to buy them? Before the war Germany took the greater part of Russia's surplus grain, her net purchases (i.e. balance of imports from over exports to Russia) being in 1913 3,688,000 metric tons, with a value of £22,219,000—a total less by £14,000,000 than two years before. If Germany were to be refused the opportunity of buying this grain, what country would take it? It looks as though Great Britain would have to exclude the Russian grain ships, at least, from the preference which is to be given to the Colonies, though it is just in corn that Canada, Australia, and India naturally wish to have a first claim upon our market. That this is the view held in Russia appears from the statement recently made by Professor Bornatsky in the *Russkoye Slovo* that the Russian attitude on the boycott question would entirely depend upon Great Britain's attitude on the question of Colonial preference. As to Russia's past exports of corn and timber to Germany in particular, he added that she could "hardly be expected to refuse to reopen commercial relations with Germany again unless England guarantees to take not only all that she sent to Germany before, but also all that she is likely to want to send in the future."

From the standpoint of Anglo-German trade relationships there are practical objections of a still more serious kind to the proposal of a trade boycott. Germany, we have seen, sent us goods in 1913 to the value of nearly £72,000,000. It may be presumed that she will continue to produce the same kind of goods, since her present ability to enter our market with them on favourable terms is a proof that she produces them economically and efficiently. She will, therefore, find it necessary to send them to other markets, and to the extent that we have hitherto competed in these markets with the same goods we shall run the risk of losing



our trade, since Germany by selling hitherto to us has proved that she can produce them more cheaply. But that is not the full extent of the injury which would be caused to this country by a complete trade boycott. Protection or no protection, a large part of the goods which we have hitherto bought from Germany would still have to be bought elsewhere, and inferentially at higher cost. Much of this trade consists of raw materials, such as certain dyeing stuffs, potash, phosphates, and other chemicals, cellulose in every form, refractory materials for smelting, and sugar. We are asked, therefore, voluntarily to renounce one of the most important sources of our raw materials, which have hitherto been bought because of their relative cheapness, and to buy the same materials where they will cost more, and still we are to be able to trade in neutral markets as successfully as before. This feat may be possible, but it is not clear how it is to be performed.

The disastrous effects of artificial restrictions of trade are seen most clearly when we come to consider the interests of individual industries. Take the important item of coal. In 1913 Germany imported coal from Great Britain to the amount of 9,210,000 tons and to the value of nearly £9,000,000, while she exported coal to France, Russia, and Italy to the amount of 6,500,000 tons and to the value of nearly £5,000,000. All this reciprocal trade would be destroyed at a stroke, with the result that even on the assumption that the Allied countries bought from Great Britain every ton of coal they had before taken from Germany, we should still on balance lose trade in this one article to a value of £4,000,000. Or take the trade in cotton and woollen yarns. In the same year Germany bought these goods of us to the value of nearly £6,500,000, while she sold similar goods to the other Allied countries to the value of about £1,000,000. Here the loss to Great Britain would still more outweigh the gain that could be expected under the most favourable conditions. To the loss in each case must be added the correspond-

ing loss upon the trade of Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria.

The more it is examined, the more clearly it is seen that the idea of an effective commercial boycott of any one of the enemy countries—and to apply such a punitive measure partially would rob it of its sting, and convert it into a fiasco—rests on a series of crude premises and fallacious and illogical assumptions. There is evidence, however, that a large section of commercial opinion is entirely antagonistic to such an unpractical method of combating German competition, and wishes to see normal trade relationships re-established as soon as possible after the war. In France the Free Trade party, led by MM. Charles Gide and Yves Guyot, is as thoroughly hostile as the same party in Great Britain; and in Russia likewise strong protests have been raised against the hasty endorsement of any action on retaliatory lines. Russia, in particular, has not taken kindly to the boycott idea, and she does so now less than ever. Even a Germanophobist journal like the *Novoye Vremya* has flatly described this form of commercial warfare as absurd, while the declarations of the new Government afford little ground for the belief that it will support it. This is emphatically a question in which every Allied country will be justified in consulting and following its own interests, for in no two countries are the circumstances alike. Most of all is perfect freedom of action necessary for Great Britain, who, owing to her greater dependence upon foreign trade, and the magnitude of her shipping trade, has so much at stake.

But it may be asked, If a commercial boycott is impracticable, why trouble about it? Let it be tried, and let experience prove its futility. The answer to this is that the very certainty of the failure of such a measure is the strongest reason why it should not be attempted at all. For the nations—and Great Britain more than any other—would expose themselves to immeasurable odium, protract and deepen unnecessarily the animosities which are the inevitable *sequelæ* of all warfare, without either advantage or purpose. If we

are to incur such a responsibility, let us at least be certain that there will be some compensation, worthy or less worthy, in return.

When the objections to a joint boycott of the Central Powers have been stated, however, it is nevertheless necessary to add that the question under discussion is less one of principle than of method. It cannot be doubted that in this country, as in the Allied countries generally, there will be a very large number of people who will resolve to do nothing that could assist in reviving the broken commercial relationships with the enemy nations, whatever the material sacrifice to themselves. It would be impertinent to criticize a feeling so natural. Here every man has a right to judge for himself and to follow his own counsels, but he has no right to judge for and determine the action of others. There is a fundamental difference, however, between a purely individual policy of retaliation—though most people would prefer to call it merely a reasonable discrimination—which consists in saying to the German or Austrian trader, “No more of your goods and no more of my money for the present, if I can help it,” and the adoption of a formal and official policy of boycotting as an act of State. In one case the punishment of the enemy nations—if it were punishment—would be personal, and the responsibility for it would begin and end with the individual citizen; in the other case it would be political, and be that of the nation as a whole.

To the extent that a genuine unwillingness to trade with these nations exists after the war it will *pro tanto* find ways and means of effective expression without statutory prohibitions of any kind. Any action to this end which the Governments might decide to adopt would either be so paltering and inadequate as not to be worth while, or so extreme as to be impracticable. Each nation has the matter entirely in its own hands, and there is no reason in the world why, in its future commercial relations, it should not—but rather every reason why it should—give to the goods of the Allied and neutral countries the largest practicable degree of preference by adopting

the simple expedient of refusing to take any others. Thus the question between the advocates and the opponents of an official economic boycott resolves itself into one of form and method, and the advantages of leaving the public to settle this question in its own way are just as obvious as the disadvantages of making it an affair of State.

The case is different with preferential trading, as regulated by differential tariffs. Whatever may be said of such tariffs, they are a recognized feature of fiscal policy, and their extension may be found necessary on the ground of financial needs quite as much as of public policy. At the same time, this question, too, is fraught with immense difficulty, and perhaps in no country so much as in Great Britain, whose herculean task it will be to devise duties which will simultaneously satisfy, or at least be equitable to, the Dominions and our Allies.

It would, however, be unwise to assume that the Central Powers, and least of all Germany, will meekly accept all that the Allies may decide to award them in the way of commercial punishment. They, too, have their own ideas about trade boycotts and preferential tariffs, and we must expect that they will at least give as good as they get in the way of retaliation. Much will depend upon the relationship in which the German and Austrian Empires come out of the struggle. Should the old confidence and consciousness of mutual dependence continue unshaken, it is at least possible that the "Central Europe" scheme of which so much has been said and written may materialize in some form, in which event the Allies would be confronted in turn by a powerful politico-economic combination of an extremely intimate kind, the direction of which would be characterized by all the resource and power of organization for which Germany has distinguished herself.

As the extremest and most popular measure of economic retaliation upon the enemy nations would appear to be a commercial boycott, so the extremest measure of political retaliation, and the one most widely advocated

is dismemberment. No advocate of dismemberment has yet explained, or pretended to explain, how it is to be brought about. Would it be done by proclamations and laws issued over the heads of the peoples concerned? But a great State like Germany could not be dissolved by merely declaring that it no longer existed. States are held together, as units and federations, by fixed laws of gravitation and attraction, and so long as these laws operate it will be as impossible to dissolve the German Empire as to dissolve the solar system. A State may in certain circumstances be destroyed, as Poland was destroyed, by sheer, brutal partition, but such a measure not even the most vehement advocate of retaliation has ventured to suggest.

It is noticeable, though not surprising, that this proposal is nowhere urged with greater insistence than in France. For the protection of which France stands in need is less protection against German economic pressure than against future German military menace. A hundred years ago Prussia was clamouring for the destruction of France as the only hope of restraining the then disturber of Europe's peace. To-day the loudest cries for the destruction of Prussia come from France, which only thus sees any guarantee of stability for the new territorial status which she hopes to see established at the end of the war. A hundred years ago the British Government, in the person of Lord Castlereagh, resisted all such proposals on the ground that they would provoke future wars, compel the Powers to maintain their military establishments at a ruinous level, and cast upon Great Britain in particular a liability far beyond her due. In every respect these objections hold good for the analogous situation which exists at the present day.

Of the many French publicists who have written on this subject none has done so more systematically, and with a clearer purpose in view, than M. Yves Guyot, the advocate of Free Trade, and an examination of his proposals will apply equally to those made in other quarters. In the first lines of the preface of his book,

“The Causes and Consequences of the War,” M. Guyot assures his readers that the book “is devoted to an attempt to deduce from the political and economic causes of the present war the principles governing the conditions which alone can ensure a lasting peace,” and he emphasizes this statement with the warning that “It is the duty of the Allies to make better preparations for peace than they made for war.” From these reasonable premises M. Guyot deduces conclusions which, if carried into effect, would, at least in name, almost wipe Prussia, the German Empire, and Austria-Hungary off the map of Europe. No measure proposed by Prussia against France in 1814 and 1815 equalled in rigour and ruthlessness the treatment which M. Guyot would, purely for her good, and in the interest of a permanent peace, award to Prussia at the present time.

Prussia (he writes) must be reduced to the old frontiers she had before the partitions of Poland in 1772, 1793, and 1795. The duchy of Poland, at least a part of Silesia, all (West) Prussia between (and including) Danzig and the mouths of the Vistula and East Prussia must be restored to Poland. The Rhine province and Westphalia must be declared autonomous. Saxony must recover what she lost in 1815. Frankfort must return to the status of a free city. The annexation of Hanover, Brunswick, Hesse, and Nassau must be declared null and void, since from the point of view of positive law the Prussian Diet was not competent to sanction it<sup>2</sup> (p. 293).

It may be added that the effect of such a disintegration of Prussia would be that twenty and a quarter millions, or about one-half, of her population would be detached from the monarchy.

The practical value of these several proposals can only be estimated when the actual strength of Prussian national sentiment is borne in mind. If M. Guyot is at all familiar with that sentiment, he must know that

<sup>2</sup> “From the point of view of positive law” the Prussian Diet had precious little to do with the annexations of 1866. They were the spoils of war, and were carried out by the King and his Government; all that the Diet did was afterwards to exercise its constitutional right to sanction the consequent changes in the frontiers of the State by means of special laws.

no parts of Prussia are more passionately loyal to the Crown, and pride themselves more upon their identity with the rest of the monarchy, than the present provinces of Rhineland and Westphalia, now united to it for over a century. These provinces would not have independence if it were forced upon them, and would not know what to do with it if they had it. The same attachment to Prussia has become part of the very life of the States annexed in 1866. Perhaps Hanover at first took the extinction of its political independence with a worse grace than the others, yet a new generation has been born which knows little of the old resentment, while the traditional Guelph particularism has to a large extent been merged in a larger patriotism as the province has shared in the general prosperity and progress of the monarchy, and Prussia has more and more asserted pre-eminence in the Empire. It is true that the Guelph party still maintains a separate existence in politics, but its representation in the Prussian Lower House and the Imperial Diet can no longer be regarded as indicating a desire to return to the status of fifty years ago.

M. Guyot himself appears to be conscious that he is proposing a measure of restitution which the populations concerned would be the first to resist. On one page he writes, "Frankfort must return to the status of a free city," and on another, "Frankfort, so ill-used in 1866, is now quite resigned to the Prussian yoke." But if these States are satisfied—as they are—with their position in the Prussian kingdom, why in the name of reason should they be again cast adrift; how could they be kept apart against their will; and what would be the value of a formal declaration of their so-called liberation? So bent is M. Guyot upon destroying Prussia and forcing on the disjointed members a liberty which they do not want, and would not have as a gift, that he even proposes to give back to Brunswick an independence which it has never lost. Owing to the refusal of the King of Hanover to renounce the Crown of that country in 1866, he was not allowed to occupy the throne of his patrimonial duchy of Brunswick, and until 1913

Brunswick was governed as an independent State by Regents elected by its own Diet. In that year, however, the heir to the throne, on marrying the German Emperor's daughter, gave satisfactory undertakings, and he thereupon succeeded to the throne. But Brunswick was never incorporated in Prussia, never lost its political independence, nor was the extinction of its reigning house proposed at the close of the Bohemian War, which settled the fate of Hanover.

Having disposed of Prussia in this thorough-going way, M. Guyot proceeds to deal similarly with the German Empire. First the kingdom of Saxony is to be detached, and to form the nucleus of a Central German confederation. Then the Southern States, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, and Hesse, are to be joined to the severed Prussian provinces of Rhineland and Westphalia, and to form a second union. How the rest of Germany is to be federated, if federated at all, is not explicitly stated, but it is worth while to remember that after Prussia had been relieved of one-half of her population, as M. Guyot proposes, after Alsace-Lorraine had been given back to France, and the two new confederations named had been created, there would probably remain some twenty States (including the four in the North which are to be revived) with a population of 30,000,000, to be disposed of or left disjointed, if they so preferred. M. Guyot, in creating new confederations, is not even concerned to pay due regard to the delicate question of confessional sympathies and antipathies, which count for so much more in Germany than in most European countries. He proposes to merge the predominantly Protestant populations of Wurtemberg and Hesse (70 per cent. of the inhabitants therein being of the reformed faith) in a group of States nearly two-thirds of whose population are Roman Catholics. Such a proposal would never work or even be tolerated.

How far these proposals have the countenance of the French Government it is impossible to state. M. Ribot has of late repeatedly disclaimed any desire to see the German Empire dissolved, yet in answer to the challenge



of the new German Chancellor, Dr. Michaelis, he nevertheless stated in the French Chamber on July 31, 1917, that the French Government obtained the promise of the ex-Czar of Russia "to support our claim to Alsace-Lorraine, torn by violence from us, and to leave us free to seek guarantees against further aggression, not by annexing to France territories on the left bank of the Rhine, but by making of those territories, if need be, an autonomous State, protecting us as well as Belgium against invasion from beyond the Rhine." It is well to face the fact that such a proposal virtually means the undoing of the settlement made by the Powers a hundred years ago.

No one who knows Germany, her history, and the spirit of her people can doubt for an instant that such a measure as the dismemberment of the Empire, were it possible, would be a signal for a new war for national unity. But it is not possible. The effect of such a reconstruction of the map of Germany as has been suggested would be that the Empire, but little diminished in population—say by 10 per cent. at the outside—would practically continue as before. For a State is much more than a piece of territory, it is a living organism, the creation of forces and affinities whose origin must be sought deep in human nature and in political interest. Any endeavour to keep apart against their will communities which have been united by a sense of mutual need and dependence would from the first be doomed to failure. At best such a measure could only be nominal and formal; and even so, it would have to be imposed by force, and directly the force was removed the sundered parts would again coalesce. Napoleon dissolved and created States at will, but they were weak and puny things, and all the same he was compelled to support his despotic statecraft by armed occupation. What a titanic task would be to-day the policing and dragooning of a virile nation of seventy millions! Supposing, therefore, that the Allies were to declare the re-establishment of the status which existed prior to 1866 and 1871, what practical difference would it make if, recognizing

still the need of mutual security, these States decided to form a new military alliance? The effect of such an alliance, whether open or secret, would be to make unfederated Germany just as strong for defensive and offensive purposes as the German Empire has proved hitherto. The more it is examined, the more is the idea of Germany's dismemberment seen to be a delusion and unrealizable so long as the States themselves are not willing to undo the unity for which their peoples so long struggled, and go back to the old condition of division and weakness.

The proposals of dismemberment which have been made in relation to Austria-Hungary need not be specially discussed here, since they will be reviewed when the racial problems of that Empire are considered. All these schemes of destruction and wreckage are as unstatesmanlike and impolitic as they are inequitable. It is singular that many of the very men who are most insistent upon the necessity of creating new States in Eastern Europe on the basis of nationality should be the readiest to destroy one of the most nationalist States in Europe—a State which, in one form or another, has had a continuity of a thousand years. Nor is this species of retaliation specially laudable. We no longer draw and quarter even the lowest criminal: is it a worthier thing to endeavour to destroy the political unity which is the very soul and spirit of nations? But, it may be said, these powerful States have attempted to destroy Belgium and Serbia. Yes, and their act is condemned and abhorred by the whole world, and will be for all time, as one of unexampled obliquity. Such an act is not one to be lightly imitated, even as a measure of retribution. It is not our interest to injure even Prussia, though we may rightly regard her as the source and origin of all Germany's follies and crimes, but only to destroy her power for evil. We shall not do this by making vain attempts to split her up into nine or ten parts, as M. Guyot proposes, but rather by striking at the political and moral causes of her malign influence over the rest of Germany, by assisting the Prussians to overthrow auto-

cracy, by confounding their militarism, breaking its evil spell, and proving to them that it is a moral monstrosity and an outrage upon civilization, and that its claims and pretensions are a huge imposture and a lie.

It is not necessary to speculate upon the motives which influence the French advocates of a policy of dismemberment in the case of Germany, for writers like MM. Barrès, Étienne, Delaire, and others have never concealed them. France looks to the future, and the instinct of self-preservation rightly tells her that so long as her eastern neighbour continues as strong in population and in material and military resources as now, the settlement upon which she counts will be fraught with danger to her. France wants back Alsace-Lorraine—not a part, but the whole, and who shall blame her?—but she knows that to take it is one thing and to keep it is another. She is now protected by alliances. But there is no permanency and little stability in alliances; for the alliance formed from interest to-day may be dissolved from interest to-morrow; and the future of her alliance with Russia, in particular, is at the present moment extremely uncertain. The security which France seeks is a security which will be offered only when the balance of advantage in population and military strength changes from the side of Germany to her own.

Take the question of population. Before the war France was a nation of about forty million inhabitants, Germany was one of nearly seventy millions. Such a disproportion is serious enough to justify the gravest apprehension, but to make the outlook worse it is changing yearly to the prejudice of France, and the war will without doubt greatly accelerate the disparity. During the past half-century the birth-rate of France has fallen progressively and without intermission until the mean rate for the five years 1911 to 1915 was only 18·2 per 1,000 inhabitants, comparing with 26 just after the war of 1870 with Prussia. Until a short time ago her population was actually decreasing, and though the movement seemed to have been checked before the war, the terrible loss of young manhood during the past three years will

almost certainly lead to a further serious relapse. What this would mean may be judged from the following figures, showing the relative movement of population in France and Germany during a period of twelve years. With an almost identical marriage rate—about 8 per 1,000—the birth-rate, death-rate, and rate of natural increase were as follows from the years 1901 to 1912:

Year.	FRANCE.			GERMANY.		
	Birth-rate.	Death-rate.	Natural Increase.	Birth-rate.	Death-rate.	Natural Increase.
1901	22·0	20·1	1·9	35·7	20·6	15·1
1902	21·6	19·5	2·1	35·1	19·5	15·6
1903	21·1	19·3	1·8	33·9	19·9	14·0
1904	20·9	19·4	1·5	34·1	19·5	14·6
1905	20·6	19·6	1·0	33·0	19·8	13·2
1906	20·5	19·9	0·6	33·1	18·2	14·8
1907	19·7	20·2	-0·5	33·2	18·0	15·2
1908	20·1	18·9	1·2	32·0	18·0	14·0
1909	19·5	19·1	0·4	31·0	17·1	13·9
1910	19·6	17·8	1·8	29·8	16·2	13·6
1911	18·7	19·6	-0·9	28·6	17·3	11·3
1912	19·0	17·5	1·5	28·3	15·6	12·7
Mean rates	20·3	19·3	1·0	32·3	18·3	14·0

There seems every likelihood that many years must elapse before France, under the most favourable conditions conceivable, will be able to make good the bare loss of life caused by the war, and it is at least possible that the loss may be destined to remain, like the destruction of Rheims Cathedral, a standing memorial of her heroic defence against unprovoked invasion. From the standpoint of France these figures, when put into concrete form, are certainly alarming, but if they carry a moral at all it is that prudence and safety call for the removal rather than the continuance and accentuation of the outstanding causes of antagonism between these two nations. It is not conceivable that so momentous a proposal as that for the dismemberment of an empire which has played so large a part in the history of Europe as Germany

could be determined by the interests of any single nation, however imperative those interests might be, or that such a measure would have any other effect than to commit Europe to another war.

It will be necessary to return in later chapters to other of the retaliatory proposals, both economic and political, enumerated above, yet before the subject of territorial changes is left for the present, reference may usefully be made to a question about which a good deal of misunderstanding would appear to exist. Both in this country and in France the demand has been made that the former duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, ceded by Denmark to Prussia and Austria as the result of the war of 1864, and since 1866 combined as a province of Prussia, should be returned to Denmark. It is to be assumed that most of the people who make this proposal are unaware that the Elbe duchies never formed an integral part of the Danish kingdom, but were only joined to it in "personal union." Holstein, indeed, was part of the old German Empire and of the Germanic Federation which succeeded it in 1815. It was the attempt made by the King of Denmark in 1848 to override their ancient rights of independence and incorporate the duchies in his monarchy that provoked them to revolution and led even the people of Schleswig to agitate for admission into the Germanic Federation. A repetition of the same attempt in 1864 landed Denmark into war with Prussia and Austria, in which the British royal family unreservedly took sides against her.

As a result of that unequal struggle Denmark ceded the duchies to the victors jointly, upon which Bismarck schemed the war of 1866, and so secured the whole of the spoil for Prussia. One provision of the Treaty of Prague, which followed the latter war, has hitherto been ignored, and it would be right to require its enforcement. This is the provision that the inhabitants of North Schleswig should have a right to decide whether they would belong to Prussia or to Denmark. The pledge was, of course, given to Austria, and Austria waived its enforcement in 1878, just before she joined

Germany in the alliance which was enlarged in 1882 by the admission of Italy and became the Triple Alliance. That the two States should have decided to treat a solemn undertaking as *non avenu* does not make the proceeding any more honourable, notwithstanding the lapse of time. For honest men and honest States there is no such thing as a statute of limitations: a debt remains a debt until it is paid. Denmark, indeed, agreed to condone the non-observance of the *plébiscite* provision when several years ago she secured a legal status for the Danish inhabitants of the lost duchy, but it was a condonation wrested from her by the force of circumstances, and it does not rectify Prussia's action. Even if it should not be within the power of the Allies to compel her, Prussia would find it to her interest to fulfil her disregarded pledge, for until she does it she will never be able to look the world straight in the face. She might—and probably would—lose a small stretch of territory and a certain number of discontented citizens, who will never become Germanized, but she would gain in natural cohesion, and a festering sore in her system of government would disappear.

The idea of neutralizing the Kiel Canal, which has also been proposed in the supposed interest of Denmark, hardly deserves serious attention. The canal lies wholly in Holstein; it thus runs through a German territory which has from time immemorial been inhabited exclusively by Germans. It can hardly be doubted that Denmark herself would be the first State to object to an arrangement which would turn against her a powerful neighbour, and so threaten her security and perhaps her very independence.

To conclude: the more the proposals of retaliation and revenge are examined, the more will they be seen to offer no hope whatever of achieving the purpose which their authors have in view, the crippling of Germany, either as a commercial or a political Power. It cannot be too emphatically asserted that any calculations which are based upon the assumption that Germany will be, or can be made, a negligible rival in the competition

of nations in the immediate future are fallacious and can only lead to disappointment. If that lesson of the war has not been taken to heart the outlook is melancholy indeed, for it means that our statesmen will be disposed to seek relief for the woes of Europe on lines which cannot lead to success. Not only so, but the surest way of stimulating Germany to the exercise of her greatest energies is to try to keep her under humiliating restraints. That is the way of human nature, and it will not alter for our convenience. Cobden wrote many words of wisdom when the Allies were endeavouring to reduce Russia in the Crimean War, and these were among them :

In estimating the difficulties of our task when undertaking to subdue such an empire to our will it is necessary not only to ascertain the extent of suffering and privation we can inflict on its population, but also the amount of moral force we evoke to sustain them in its endurance.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of warnings from all sorts of sources, the British nation insisted on taking Germany too cheaply before the war, and there is a danger that the same mistake may be repeated after it. The men who most advocate trade boycotts, dismemberment, and all the rest of the impossible schemes for crippling the enemy are the same men who three years ago had decided both the war and the peace before a battle had been fought, and who talked volubly upon the "economic exhaustion" which was to reduce Austria-Hungary in three months and Germany in six at the outside. Half the mistakes made by the Allies in the conduct of the war, and particularly their miscalculations and want of foresight—their leading statesmen have admitted it a hundred times—have been due to a disposition to underrate Germany's strength in man-power, material-power, and above all will-power. Clever theorists have persisted in confusing men with statistics and statistics with men—they are doing it to-day, and will continue to do it to the end of the chapter—forgetting that it is the spirit of a nation

<sup>2</sup> Reprinted in Cobden's "Political Writings," vol. ii., pp. 141, 142.

that counts first, last, and all the time. How obvious this truth is, yet how persistently it is ignored!

I am not prepared even now to admit that, in the existing circumstances, the absence of the stimulating influence of Germany as an economic rival would be good for Europe. The proverbial pike in the carp pond may be very inconvenient, but at any rate it keeps the other fishes alert and active. Those, however, who are concerned to protect themselves against German competition in the future must look to other devices altogether, and above all must fight Germany with her own weapons of science, education, and not least of organization. There is truth in the words of that acute German publicist, Dr. Friedrich Naumann, whose book, "Mittel-Europa," has given the Allies so much food for thought, "The war was only the continuation of our ordinary life, with other means, but fundamentally with the same ends." In spite of all its sins, the German nation remains still the best organized community in the world. But organization implies foresight and a careful adaptation of means to the ends pursued, and here Germany excels just in proportion as we as a nation are deficient.

In the winter of the first year of war I was asked by a Minister of State, whose record, high before the war, may be higher after it, whether I believed that Germany would be able to carry on far into the new year. To my question, "Why not?" he replied, "The food question." "The war," I said, "has not begun yet. Germany will be able to feed herself so long as she can keep the Russians out of her granary (i.e. Eastern Prussia).<sup>1</sup> If pressure on her food supplies comes, she will still be able to feed herself with care and stinting"; and I added, "There is no hope for us there." It would be absurd to claim credit for holding these views at that time. Any other man who knew Germany at first hand, knew the course of her modern domestic policy, her resources, and above all the spirit of her people, would have given the same

<sup>1</sup> The six eastern provinces of Prussia produce about one-half both of the rye and the potatoes produced in the entire German Empire.



answer, with complete assurance that the event would justify it.

What has happened? Russia, after having struck heavily at East Prussia, was driven back far behind her own frontier, and she has never recovered from the recoil; the granary of North Germany was thus preserved; and the nation has been fed until to-day, and will be fed to the end.<sup>1</sup> Of course, it is suffering, and may suffer still more, but I do not believe there is any privation that the civilian population of Germany, as I know it, will not be willing to endure for the encouragement of the men at the front and the protection of the fatherland, so long, at least, as short rations of food are eked out by official assurances that all is well with the war. It would be a different matter should the Government begin to be despondent; in that event it is possible that the public confidence would collapse like a pack of cards and a panic set in, but as to that I prefer not to indulge in prophecy.

Let us be candid enough to admit that this reliance of a nation of nearly seventy millions—now only half agricultural—upon its own food resources, in spite of the blockade which has been drawn round it more and more closely as the months have passed, is a wonderful achievement, but let us remember that there has been no chance whatever in the conditions which have made it possible. Like the accumulation of men, munitions, and all the implements of war, the safeguarding of the nation's food supplies had similarly been prepared deliberately years beforehand by laws and devices of various kinds for the encouragement of agriculture. The second Chancellor, Caprivi, though he departed from the policy of extreme Protection, and passed the commercial treaties of 1893 and later years, refused to do anything which might undermine the prosperity of agriculture or lessen the country's ability to feed itself in time of war. That

<sup>1</sup> On April 21, 1916—now eighteen months ago—the *Nation* published a highly coloured article on Germany's imminent starvation, which was summarized as follows: "There would appear to be no doubt that even under present conditions as established—even without fresh advances on any front—Germany is doomed."

he then foresaw that the food question would in that event become vitally important is clearly shown by some words spoken by him in the Imperial Diet on December 10, 1891.

The chief reason (he said) for the necessity for maintaining agriculture is exclusively one of State. I am convinced that such a cultivation of grain is indispensable to us as will, in case of need, suffice to feed even our increasing population in time of war, and that the State which cannot exist from its own agricultural produce is on the downward path. There may sometimes be a bad harvest, it is true, but in order to provide against such a contingency, especially in war-time, we can take the precaution of allying ourselves with grain-growing States on whom we can count even in time of war. I have heard it said that this is an exaggerated view, and that in case of a war with France and Russia we could obtain corn by sea. I would not like to base the existence of the State upon such factors. We cannot know what the maritime Powers would, in case of a European conflagration, regard as contraband of war. In my past life as a soldier I acquired the unshakable conviction that in the future war the feeding of the army and the nation would be the deciding factor.

Seldom has foresight been more abundantly justified by events. But the nation which so deliberately and successfully organized itself for war will not be at a loss to discover ways of organizing its recovery as soon as peace returns, and I predict with confidence that the rapidity of this recovery will even more startle the world than did the recovery of France after 1870. For that reason it behoves the people of this country not to under-rate the place which Germany will occupy and—whether we like the fact or not—the meaning which she will again have for us, even more than for any other nation, in the future years. For myself, I should fear Germany far more as a bound than a free country, and that is why I see in the policy of repression and restraint only an infinite potentiality of mischief and danger.

Incidentally it is deserving of thought that the German food question suggests a possibility of future rivalry of

another kind with this country, which should sober those who seek relief against German pressure in vain projects of retaliation, instead of in well-devised measures of accommodation. Little did those who during recent years have protested against Germany's ambition to be a great naval Power—and most of us have done it at one time or another—believe that the time would so soon come when it would fall to Great Britain to bring home to her the immense importance of a powerful fleet. Who can doubt that if the German Navy had been either much stronger or much weaker than it is, the war would not have dragged on so long as it has? The future naval relationships of the two nations may well give both of them anxiety, for unless one of two things happens; either an international agreement for disarmament applying to navies as well as armies, or a fundamental revision of the international sea law, we may confidently expect that the earliest measure of national defence to which Germany will put her hand after the war will be the strengthening of her fleet, and that she will henceforth build, against Great Britain, as her only serious naval rival, as never before.

## CHAPTER III

### THE DELUSION OF ALLIANCES

"The eyes of mankind are opened, and communities must be held together by an evident and solid interest."—*Burke*.

"I feel that, however we may wish to live on the most friendly terms with the French Government . . . we ought not to keep ourselves apart from other nations of Europe, but that . . . we should be ready to act with others and to declare . . . that the Powers of Europe, if they wish to maintain peace, must respect each other's rights, must respect each other's limits, and above all restore, and not disturb, that commercial confidence, which is the result of peace, which tends to peace, and which ultimately forms the happiness of nations."—*Lord John Russell, March, 1860*.

"All absolute alliances between Great Powers, intended for more than a special and clearly defined object, appear to me dangerous. They generally lead to great political errors and to an unjust dictatorship. As long as there was one great cause, one definite object, namely the overthrow of Napoleon, such an absolute alliance appeared good to me. But from the moment that its specific and palpable object was gone, and it was directed against something general and invisible, against a spiritual demon whom everybody sees, feels, and understands according to his own fancy, I have become very doubtful as to its value."—*Letter of Baron Stockmar (January 27, 1850, quoted in "Memoirs," vol. ii., pp. 389, 390)*.

"In opening negotiations for peace after a war it should never be forgotten that the enemy of to-day may become the friend and ally of to-morrow."—*Lord Augustus Loftus (sometime British Ambassador to Russia and Germany), "Recollections," vol. i. p. 267*.

"What our duty is at this critical moment is to maintain the Empire of England. Nor will we ever take any step, though it may obtain for a moment comparative quiet and a false prosperity, that hazards the existence of that Empire."—*Mr. Disraeli in his last important speech on foreign policy in the House of Commons, 1876*.

THE arguments advanced in the preceding pages have been designed to suggest the wisdom of a peace settlement which, beyond the limits imposed by the necessity of achieving certain well-defined aims, such as the estab-

lishment of the independence of invaded territories and the satisfaction of the rightful claims of subject races, shall be a settlement by consent. The essential demands upon the enemy nations having been accepted, the rest would be a bargain, concluded as the result of free negotiation, so that the final outcome would be a treaty based upon a common agreement of all the States concerned. The alternative to such agreement is a settlement by compulsion, which would imply the continuance after the war of the system of alliances and counter-alliances which responsible statesmen of Allied, Neutral, and enemy nations alike have declared to be a malignant feature of the present European political system, and entirely inadmissible into the international relationships of the future.

“Put not your trust in Princes” used to be accounted one of the soundest maxims of political philosophy. A maxim of greater urgency for modern times would be, “Put not your trust in alliances.” No profound knowledge of political history is necessary to justify the incredulity of those who decline to build too confident hopes upon the combinations which have been called into existence by the present war. How few of the alliances of the past century, to go no farther back, have proved of long duration; how many of them had at best a precarious existence and languished and fell to pieces directly they had fulfilled—or failed to fulfil—the immediate purposes for which they were formed!

At the time of the Congress of Vienna France was without a friend in Europe, yet three years later Czar Alexander I was suspected of a design to desert his allies for the common enemy.<sup>1</sup> No nation had at that time greater reason for bitter feelings against France than the Prussians: had Prussia had her way, France would have been cast out of the Congress of Vienna a mutilated torso, torn limb from limb. Nevertheless, by the middle of the century, Bismarck, arch-monarchist though he was, was prepared to enter into

<sup>1</sup> Letter of the Duke of Wellington to Lord Castlereagh, August 24, 1818.

an alliance with the hereditary enemy, in defiance of the sacred principle of legitimism.

The Holy Alliance was formed in 1815 by Russia, Austria, and Prussia as a permanent union for the maintenance of peace, the guarantee of reciprocal rights, and resistance to democratic movements. Less than forty years later came the Crimean War, in which Austria was the ally of France against Russia, while Prussia, under a Laodicean Sovereign, who was neither cold nor hot, looked on in inglorious inaction. In that war France and Great Britain fought side by side, but no sooner was the campaign over than France turned her back upon her ally and made friends with her late antagonist.

Again, Prussia and Austria fought the battle of German unity in 1866, yet only six years later the vanquished Habsburg Power pocketed its pride and joined the victor, now absorbed in the German Empire, in the original *entente* of the three Emperors, out of which sprang the more intimate Austro-German Alliance of 1879.

For a large part of last century Great Britain and Russia quarrelled over the Oriental question, once going to war over it and more than once preparing to do so. During the whole of the century the maintenance of Turkey was regarded by British statesmen as one of the most vital of our interests, and it was Lord Beaconsfield's boast that he had effectively baulked Russian designs in the east of Europe. Yet that did not prevent the entire reversal of British policy and the cleaning of the slate in 1907, when the Anglo-French *entente* became a triple agreement, having the practical value of a military alliance. To-day hardly any one in England would lift a finger to save the Sultan's empire from destruction.

Our relations with Austria have undergone a transformation no less disconcerting to the politician who builds his faith upon the stability of foreign relationships. Throughout last century we were Austria's close friends, even at a time when she was tyrannizing over a large part of struggling Italy; and the leading

statesmen of the 'fifties and 'sixties greatly preferred a Germany divided and impotent, so long as Austria continued to be a Great Power, to a Germany unified under Prussia. To-day Prussia and Austria are fighting side by side, with Great Britain and Italy as their antagonists.

The fluctuations which have marked the relations of Germany and Russia and those of France and Italy since the third quarter of last century, may be cited in further illustrations of the unsafety of all calculations based upon the assumption of the permanence or even the long duration of alliances. Bismarck, the greatest adept of modern times at alliance-making, once said that every engagement of the kind is subject to the implicit reservation "*rebus sic stantibus*," and he contended that directly alliance and interest come into serious conflict it is the alliance that must always go.

All treaties between Great Powers (he writes in his "Reflections and Reminiscences," vol. ii., p. 270) cease to be unconditionally binding as soon as they are tested by the struggle for existence. No great nation will ever be induced to sacrifice its existence on the altar of fidelity to contract when it is compelled to choose between the two. The answer "*Ultra posse nemo obligatur*" holds good in spite of all treaty formulas whatsoever, nor can any treaty guarantee the discharge of obligations when the private interest of those who lie under them no longer reinforces the text and its earliest interpretation.

It may be said that historical analogies are apt to be fallacious, and that in any case the conditions now prevailing are altogether unique. It is true that few such analogies are so faithful that they can be pressed beyond a certain point. But the underlying motives of statecraft and public policy do not change; the fact remains that every State seeks first its own interests, and in forming foreign attachments always asks itself where and in what company these can best be served.

Nor must it be overlooked that the uncertainty of all international arrangements of the kind may in future be influenced by a factor to which modern political developments have given a new and larger importance.

So long as alliances were the personal affairs of Sovereigns they were both easier to conclude and easier to maintain. An official friendship existed between Russia and Prussia for ninety years of the last century, but it was founded on the personal relationships of the Sovereigns, and never reflected the true attitude of the two nations to each other. The day of purely dynastic alliances, however, is past: to-day an alliance to be durable must carry the assent of the nations concerned, be an expression of their real sentiments towards each other, and serve their mutual advantage in an equal degree. But to assure the observance of the last condition is vastly more difficult than formerly, owing to the greater complexity of modern life, the variety of interests that need to be allowed for, and the difficulty of striking a fair balance between the claims of both sides. Above all, the increasing extent to which economic and material tend to outweigh purely political considerations in foreign relationships increases enormously the sphere of possible friction, and in the absence of new safeguards, resulting from international agreements upon a large scale, may greatly lessen the chances of concluding fast arrangements of long duration.

Many men who hold the mind of the public at the present time speak and write as though the present war had entirely changed the motive forces which govern political action and had even transformed human nature itself. Those who believe that national characteristics, as they are slow of growth, so also are slow of modification, have of late found their patience put to a severe test as they have been invited day by day, by suggestion even more than by direct statement, to renounce all they ever knew or believed about some of the leading nations of Europe, and to assume that what in the past was held to be bad in our present friends was really good, and that all that was thought good in our present enemies was just as certainly bad. To serious minds there is something childish in these endeavours to prove that for more decades than one dares to recall public opinion has been fed upon misrepresentation and untruth



—an assumption discreditable to the nation's instructors and humiliating to those who have been misled. It is doubtful whether the cause of truth or of friendship is really served by intellectual manœuvring of this kind. It should be possible to form friendships with nations with which we have hitherto had many political misunderstandings without pretending that our past antagonisms were entirely groundless or even never existed at all; nay, more, without blinding our eyes to the certainty that estrangements will be possible in the future, and that no alliances or agreements or 'diplomatic *ententes* of any kind can afford an effectual guarantee of the contrary.

Lord Palmerston still stands for his countrymen as one of the most level-headed of British statesmen, and his doctrine of the basis of international friendships in general, though it may not represent political morality at the highest level, has hitherto been borne out by the facts of experience. Speaking in the House of Commons on March 1, 1848, he said :

As to the romantic notion that nations or Governments are much or permanently influenced by friendships and God knows what, I say that those who maintain those notions, and compare the intercourse of individuals to the intercourse of nations, are indulging a vain dream. The only thing which makes one Government follow the advice and yield to the counsel of another is the hope of benefit to accrue from adopting it or fear of the consequences of opposing it.

The words merely say more or less bluntly what everybody knows to be true even at the present time. It is certain that the fellowship between the Allies, which has been cemented by blood and strengthened by great suffering and sacrifice, will long outlive political groupings of the ordinary kind. Nevertheless, everything will depend upon the terms of that fellowship, not as they exist to-day, but as they will be arranged at the peace settlement. Hence the vast importance of a clear perception not merely of the conditions of the present and the near future, but of the most distant possibilities,

for what is done now will, for good or ill, affect the future of the homeland and the Empire and their peoples for generations to come. It is natural, therefore, that those who, with all loyalty to the Allies, feel that they are Englishmen and Britons first and Europeans afterwards, should be concerned to know to what liabilities and undertakings their country is to be committed.

The supreme danger is that it might be led to incur responsibilities beyond its due share or even its power to fulfil them. It would not be the first time in our history that Great Britain has been put, or has put herself, forward in support of great causes in which her interest has been pledged beyond right and reason, and others have reaped the advantage. In his book on "The Growth of British Policy" Seeley points to the attitude of this country in the German Thirty Years' War as an illustration in point. It was right and proper, he says, that England should have taken part in that struggle, but the time came when she took too large a part, until "England in her bewilderment finds herself dragged into wars which she neither understands nor approves, but to which she sees no end." <sup>1</sup> In recent times the same thing happened during the Crimean War, and it would have been repeated in 1864 and 1878 had perverse statesmanship had its way.

Let it not be assumed that the suggestion is here made, even obliquely, that Great Britain should shirk any rightful implication of her responsibilities towards the Allies. In such a matter, however, what can be shown, on a full consideration and a long view of the European question as a whole, to be good or bad for any one of the Allies would be equally good or bad for the others. All the more needful is it, therefore, that in the coming settlement the commitments of this country and of all the Allies should be determined with the utmost circumspection, lest it should be found too late that by exceeding the limits of equity they should have also exceeded the limits of wisdom, prudence, and safety.

<sup>1</sup> "Growth of British Policy," pp. 320-322.

The British nation is prepared to see this war to a finish, however long and arduous the task, for when its hand is once put to the plough, it ploughs to the last furrow. It is the end, however, that most matters—the task of reconstruction which will follow when arms have been laid down with victory and honour ; and in entering upon this task Great Britain will have just the same right as any other Allied Power to regard first the necessities of her own position as determined, not by a desire for political advantage or gain of any material kind, but by the imperative need for a durable, because a reasonable, peace. Above all, when the present struggle is over and the terms of agreement are arranged, this country, like every other Allied country, will be entitled to claim back the complete freedom of action which it enjoyed before the existing alliances and *ententes* were concluded, and it should not be expected to enter into any obligations whatever which would limit that freedom in any form or degree.

The gravamen of the settlement problem is obviously the question of annexations, and it is well that we should face the fact with perfect candour and honesty, for it cannot be evaded when once we come to close grips with the issues to be decided. Some words which were written by Lord Castlereagh on September 4, 1815, to Lord Clancarty, who followed Wellington as the British plenipotentiary at the Congress of Vienna, suggest elements of grave danger in the present situation :

It is curious to observe the insatiable spirit of getting something without a thought of how it is to be preserved. There is not a Power, however feeble, that borders France from the Channel to the Mediterranean that is not pushing some acquisition under the plea of security and rectification of frontier. They seem to have no dread of a kick from the Lion when his toils are removed, and are foolish enough to suppose that the great Powers of Europe are to be in readiness to protect him in the enjoyment of these petty spoils.

Let us recall ever again to our minds the teaching of history, emphasized as never before by the Peace of

Frankfort of May 10, 1871, that a peace which is imposed by force has always to be maintained by force. Shall we be satisfied with such a peace, and if so shall we be prepared to face the inevitable consequences? If so, what becomes of our hope that this is a war to end war by removing the causes of past discords and introducing a new international order of conciliation and good-will?

Mr. Gladstone said that he disliked alliances of all kinds, whether simple or double, as not making for peace. If Europe is not to be again committed to this evil system, this question of annexations will have to be watched with the most anxious care. There is, of course, an alternative to the continuation of alliances of the old type, and it is that the Powers by whose sanction the desired territorial changes are to be made shall be prepared for all time to back up their assent by force of arms. But such an arrangement would only be an alliance on a larger scale, and if the settlement were repudiated by the States which had ceded territory against their will the old animosities would continue as before, and Europe would still be divided into hostile camps. It is plain that if there is to be a reciprocal guarantee of territory immense and incalculable liabilities will be imposed upon the Allied Powers, and that to rush into these liabilities without carefully counting the cost might land more than one of them, sooner or later, into irreparable disaster.

On the other hand, would France, in the absence of such a guarantee, urge her claim for the complete and unconditional restitution of Alsace and Lorraine—a claim with which, none the less, every admirer of that wonderful nation must profoundly sympathize—or even accept back the lost provinces if spontaneously pressed on her by the other Powers? Would Denmark receive otherwise than with a reproachful refusal the offer of Schleswig-Holstein on the same terms? Questions of this kind are not dictated by want of regard for these and other countries which have been marked out for territorial compensation by many, perhaps most, of

the writers who have discussed the problem of the settlement, but rather by a sincere concern for their permanent interests and anxiety lest those interests should be menaced by short-sighted action and fateful wrong decisions incapable of recall. It would be infinitely easier and pleasanter for those who hold this standpoint to fall in with what would appear to be still the predominant sentiment, and, in anticipation of an Allied triumph, to add their voices to the chorus of "*Væ victis!*" But the way of ease is not always the way of honesty, and seldom that of safety, and contemplating as they do with dark foreboding and dread the consequences of a policy of indiscriminate and violent annexations, it is their duty to utter the most urgent warning within their power while there is still time for reflection.

The case is not different with our own country, and it is well that the point should be brought home to us. There is a large party favourable to the retention of some or all of Germany's colonies, as a mere act of force, and with no suggestion of exchange or adjustment of any kind. The idea is easy to understand when once we accept the retaliatory order of ideas and begin to repudiate Mr. Asquith's pledge that Great Britain did not go to war for territorial gain. But, again, should we always be in a position, and if in a position should we be prepared, to maintain by our own unassisted arms all the possessions now occupied by our victorious troops, or should we likewise look to the Allies to stand as surety for us in the event of difficulties and entanglements arising with Germany? Even assuming a reciprocal guarantee of the integrity of the new European status, such as was given to each other by the members of the Holy Alliance a century ago, is it conceivable that the Allies would make themselves responsible for the security of the world-wide British Empire? And would such a guarantee hold good for future acquisitions as well as for our present possessions? Such acquisitions might be the inevitable result of existing conditions, and in no way due to arbitrary acts of aggression, yet they

might, none the less, create serious occasions of friction with other Powers. It is evident that any reciprocal "all-in" guarantee of the kind would commit the Allied nations to illimitable liabilities.

If, however, the guarantee were to affect only Europe, Great Britain would be offered a protection which she does not need. In Europe she can take good care of herself; her real source of military weakness is across the seas. An empire which extends to every quarter of the globe is and must ever be immensely vulnerable; every outpost is a point of attack, and the weakness of every weak point is magnified by distance and isolation. The war has proved conclusively that, given a sufficient naval superiority, the British Empire, when it chooses to put forth its full strength, has nothing to fear from Germany or any other Power, and that its fighting material is more than a match for the best Prussian products of a century of forced military service. But if the coming peace is to be a peace of conquest, we must count on a German naval rivalry surpassing anything we have yet seen, and meantime our military system would necessarily have to accommodate itself to the systems of the great Continental Powers. These are prospects not to be viewed without grave apprehension.

Doubtless the self-governing Dominions and colonies, which have made so noble a response to the call of humanity and the Empire in the present war, will be ready in the coming years to bear a larger share than hitherto of the burden of imperial defence. There are, however, rigid limits, imposed by population, finance, and other considerations, beyond which they could not be willing, might not be able, and ought not to be expected to go. In the case of war between Germany and Great Britain over purely colonial issues, in which Germany had the support of a powerful navy and we stood alone, the strain upon the resources both of the mother country and the other parts of the Empire might exceed anything witnessed in the present struggle. No one who knows the German nation will doubt for an instant that the appropriation of Germany's colonies would

make such a war certain. Rightly or wrongly—and it would not matter which—the act would be regarded as one of mere covetous spoliation, and would be felt as an injury and a humiliation which only the arbitrament of arms could wipe out. Meanwhile, until the time was ripe for a new encounter, the two nations would continue armed to the teeth, piling up munitions of war until the inevitable day of reckoning came, without regard for the cost.

The conclusion to which these considerations point seems beyond dispute. It is that a purely coercive peace will imply the continued enslavement of Europe to the disastrous tradition of alliances. To build peace upon such a foundation, however, is to build it upon quicksands, for no alliance is certain, and the more complicated the issues the less its certainty. But, further, to perpetuate the policy of alliances is to reassert and reinvigorate the doctrine of the balance of power, with all its dangerous implications. That means that Europe, as soon as she has emerged from one catastrophe, is to enter upon a course which will inevitably lead her to another and perhaps a greater. Thus history is to teach us no lesson : civilization has been imperilled, but we are not to rest until it has been destroyed.

The alternative to such a policy has been stated by President Wilson in words which have acquired a new significance owing to the fact that since they were uttered America has come into the field as the active auxiliary of the Allies, and by so doing has asserted her right to a full voice in the coming settlement :

The question upon which the whole future peace and policy of the whole depends is this : Is the present a struggle for a just and secure peace, or only for a new balance of power ?

If it be only a struggle for a new balance of power, who will guarantee, who can guarantee, the stable equilibrium of the new arrangement ? Only a tranquil Europe can be a stable Europe. There must be, not a balance of power, but a community of power ; not organized rivalries, but an organized common peace.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Speech in the United States Senate, January 22, 1917.

In this alternative, and this alternative only, lies Europe's hope. To seek relief elsewhere is to engage in a quest no less perilous than futile.

Closely allied to this question of alliances, however, is another which has not yet received the attention which it deserves. Perhaps one of the least justifiable assumptions made by many of the friends of retaliation is the assumption that neutral opinion will permanently be identified with the interests of the Allies, and that it may be counted on to endorse as a matter of course whatever peace policy the Allies may think fit to adopt. Dr. E. Daniels, a well-known German political essayist, cordially disposed to Great Britain before the war and not unsympathetic to her now, wrote recently :

In waging war the English have at all times been accustomed to represent the interests for which they have fought as universal interests. It is not necessary to impute to them hypocrisy in this. In any case they have done it quite as much for their own inspiration as for that of others.<sup>1</sup>

The words contain just sufficient truth to warn us against a too confident belief that when the war is over the neutral nations will continue to us the moral support which so many of them have hitherto given in such liberal measure. The one concern of the neutrals, when an armistice is concluded as a condition precedent to the formal discussion of peace preliminaries, will be to hasten the day of definitive peace, so that the world may as soon as possible return to its normal ways and begin in earnest the great task of reorganization. The attitude of these nations cannot be ignored, since even if they should not be represented in the Peace Congress, they will be able to exert great influence upon the future course of events. Can it be doubted that they will view with the utmost impatience and disapprobation any measures which seriously transcend the avowed objects of the war as originally outlined by the Allies? Extreme policies always provoke reaction; mankind in the mass is not mean, but generous, and its better instincts would revolt

<sup>1</sup> *Preussische Jahrbücher*, September, 1916.



against undue harshness to beaten foes, whatever the pretext.

Hitherto the Allies have been greatly fortified by the knowledge that the sympathy and moral influence of the neutral countries have been almost wholly with them. But these countries cannot be expected to associate themselves with any policy which would engender a spirit of hatred and revenge, since this, by reacting upon their own relationships with Germany and Austria, would add to their already heavy accumulation of injury and loss.

It is a misfortune that the epitome of the opinions of neutral nations which is offered to the British public day by day has focused attention so exclusively upon the attitude of the more uncompromising friends of the Allies, and has paid too little attention to that of the moderate men who in most countries hold the balance, and whose views it is perhaps even more useful to know. Those who are in a position to read foreign newspapers for themselves, and who draw their own conclusions accordingly, know that while there has never been the slightest doubt as to the intense sympathy of neutral countries in general with the Allies and the causes for which they are fighting, there is no indication whatever that they would support the Allies in the high-handed policy of retaliation which is so commonly advocated in this country and France. Least of all could this be the case in countries with a large population of Teutonic extraction, and above all in the United States, though now Germany's active antagonist.

The census of that country in 1910 showed that of a foreign-born population of 13,346,000, 2,501,000 were born in Germany; the number of those born of German parents is placed at 8,300,000; while it has been estimated that no fewer than 18,600,000 inhabitants, or over one-fifth of the whole population (91,972,000), are of German blood. A nation associated with the German Empire and the German races everywhere by ties so many and intimate, would be bound in its own interest to oppose retaliatory measures, of whatever kind, which would have the effect of uniting Germanism throughout

the world in new designs of self-assertion and revindication, and so of introducing into its own household bitter and disruptive controversies.

Not only so, but as an amalgam of many races and cultures, the American nation is far too conscious of the important contribution which Germany has made to its life in the past, so supplementing the special gifts and characteristics which form part of its Anglo-Saxon dowry, to wish to cut itself off permanently from the purer streams of German influence. Since America came into the war her chief citizen has let it be clearly known that her quarrel is not with the German people, but with their autocratic Government and the perverse and immoral principles and policies by which it has endeavoured, only too successfully, to poison the national mind and lower the standard of national life and conduct.

We enter this war only when clearly forced into it (said President Wilson in his historical address to Congress on April 2, 1917) because there are no other means of defending our rights. It will be easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit of right and fairness because we act without animus, not in enmity towards a people, or with a desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible Government, which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and right, and is running amok. We are, let me say again, sincere friends of the German people, and shall desire nothing so much as an early re-establishment of intimate relations to our mutual advantage. However hard it may be for them for the time being to believe this, it is spoken from our hearts. We have borne with their present Government through all these bitter months because of that friendship, exercising patience and forbearance which otherwise would have been impossible. We shall, happily, still have an opportunity to prove that friendship in our daily attitude and actions towards millions of men and women of German birth and native sympathy who live amongst us and share our life, and we shall be proud to prove it towards all who in fact are loyal to their neighbours and to the Government in the hour of test.

It may confidently be expected that this will be the future attitude of all neutral nations which have had dealings with Germany in the past. With them, too, interest will reinforce reason and morality, and that the more since an Allied policy of retaliation would afford them all the justification they needed.

We must also be prepared for unpleasant surprises if we assume too readily that Germany, though to-day so unpopular, will for any long time be politically isolated even in Europe. Germany cannot afford to stand alone ; she must have, if not allies, at least friends, and because they are needful to her she will somehow find them, at whatever price. Granted that her diplomacy has for many years been clumsy and devoid of intelligence or insight, so that often the moves which have probably seemed to her to be master strokes of cleverness—as, for example, during the war her intrigues in Ireland, Africa, and India, her repeated attempts to divide the Allies, and latterly her mischief-making in Mexico—are only evidences of unparalleled awkwardness, of persistent failure to admit human nature into her calculations, and a constitutional inability to understand that crooked ways seldom succeed in the long run in politics any more than in other spheres of action. Nevertheless, if to-day German statecraft appears to be bankrupt in originality, force, and influence, the strong man for whom Germany has waited so long, and whom she needs now more than ever before, will yet appear, and with him may come the hope of recovery in prestige and repute.

In the great crises of her modern history Germany has seldom lacked for long capable leaders, whether Sovereigns or statesmen, who have led her out of darkness into the new day. After the Thirty Years' War the Great Elector Frederick William was the good genius of Prussia. At the time of her *débâcle* during the Napoleonic wars, when a strong King was lacking, it fell to far-seeing statesmen like Stein, Hardenberg, and Humboldt to take in hand and carry to success the great work of internal reconstruction. When in the middle of last century the Hohenzollern kingdom seemed to

have become more than ever a vassal of Austria, and the hopes of German unity to have been extinguished, a Bismarck arose, and with him Prussia once again recovered her lost will. Since her first Chancellor Germany has produced no great statesman, and until she departed from the lines of policy laid down by him she did not perhaps suffer in consequence. It may be that in the time of her extremity there will once more appear the strong leader who will retrieve her political fortunes, restore her shattered prestige, and make good the havoc wrought to the national life by the errors and follies which have now so long cast discredit upon her statesmanship.

It is a curious evidence of the cold-bloodedness and audacity of German *Realpolitik* that while the war continues in full fury, and the U boats are busy with their murderous work, German publicists are already seriously discussing ways and means of reconciliation with their enemies and deliberately weighing the eligibility of the several Allies to be their country's future associates. Germany would appear to be halting between two opinions: shall it be her policy to make peace with the East or the West of Europe? Both have strong advocates. That the Conservatives in general are anxious that the war shall not lead to permanent alienation from Russia is not strange, since in the past the absolutism across the Vistula has been one of the mainstays of the semi-absolutism which still exists west of that river. Long before the war broke out some of the foremost spokesmen of the Conservative party were working for a revised Triple Alliance in which Russia was to have taken part. The reason for the preference was, of course, the fear that under Anglo-French influence Russia would more and more embrace the hateful spirit of democracy, and it is probable that this fear is the governing motive of their tolerant attitude towards Russia to-day.

More significant, however, is the fact that the leading representatives of the National Liberal party, to which the great industrialists belong, share the same preference, though here other motives come into play, and chiefly

the hope of resuming the large and profitable trade with Russia which, down to the eve of the war, fell to the iron and steel and engineering trades, not merely in the form of export, but owing to the numerous German works which are established in Russia and the Russian works which are controlled by German capital. The leader of the parliamentary group, Herr Ernst Bassermann,<sup>1</sup> a man whose tenure of that position is only to be explained by the party's intellectual impoverishment, is so carried away by his hatred of Great Britain that he is prepared to see Germany enter into a partnership, not only with Russia, but with Japan, if only they will say that they are willing.

The antagonism between Germany and England and the eternal hatred entertained by France towards Germany (he wrote in March, 1917) will compel us after the war to look eastward. The unfortunate peace of Shimonoseki divides us for the present from Japan, and resulted in the loss of Kiaochow ; but there are signs in Japan of gathering dissatisfaction with England, and in skilful German hands this might lead to a *rapprochement* towards Japan which could only be beneficial to us.

This war, moreover, has taught Russia that her Western policy, including her desire for Constantinople, is a Utopia. She now sees that she cannot win against Germany and her allies. The result will be that Russia will turn more and more to a realization of her ambitions in the East, and as Russia is already beginning to chafe under British tyranny, it ought to be comparatively easy for Germany to unite with her eastern neighbour in checkmating England and in securing the freedom of the seas.

The idea of reconciliation with Russia as a possible alternative to isolation also finds expression amongst Liberals of a robusiter type. One of these, Herr Hans Borst, writing in the *Neue Rundschau*—an ably conducted review which before the war represented an advanced but independent Liberalism—for November, 1916, hazards the belief that “the Russian peril is exaggerated,” and adds, “It is necessary and feasible to

<sup>1</sup> The death of Herr Bassermann was reported on July 24, 1917.

arrive at a peace which will not make impossible for ever an understanding with Russia."

On the other hand, there is a large and influential party in Germany which counts on the restoration of a working relationship with Great Britain, a relationship free from romance or enthusiasm on either side, yet commended by mutual interest. This standpoint was advocated by the well-known political essayist, Herr F. Meinicke, in an article contributed to the same review in June, 1916. After observing that "The talk of irreconcilable world-antagonisms which is being indulged in leaves us unmoved," and that "Such antagonisms often become irreconcilable only because of the primitive spirit of power-politics, taking the form of exaggerated aims and a disproportion between a nation's wishes and its capacity to realize them," the writer warned his countrymen against any future ambitions of the kind, and recalling the aggression of Louis XIV, added, "Under no circumstances dare Germany repeat this terrible mistake. Never dare we take upon ourselves the reproach of perpetuating the unnatural alliance of England with Russia by false moves on the chessboard of politics."

According to Herr Meinicke, who probably represents what is still the sentiment of genuine German Liberalism, as opposed to the highly-diluted Liberalism of Bassermann and his friends, the aim of German statesmanship ought to be "to attempt to conclude with England at the right time a peace on the principle 'live and let live!'" and "to establish our position as a Continental Power against Russia more than any other country." Here speaks undoubtedly the spirit of the German party of political progress, such as it is. More lately the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, and other influential organs of positive Liberalism have written in the same sense with singular frankness, and their utterances are far more representative of public opinion than are those of the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* and the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, the organs of the West Prussian iron and steel magnates and of West Prussian Clericalism respectively.

Singular to say, there is nowhere greater difference of opinion upon the question whether it were better for Germany that the coming peace should be on conditions favourable to a later understanding with her Eastern or with her Western neighbour than in the Socialist party. It is true that in the past this party has exercised only the slightest influence upon the Government and public policy, but it is by far the most numerous in Germany, and after the war it will be a political force which no German Government or even Sovereign will any longer venture to take lightly. When on August 4, 1914, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg went to the Imperial Diet to inform it that the Emperor had declared war, and to ask the representatives of the nation to perform the only part allotted to them by the constitution when a decision of such magnitude is taken, to vote the necessary funds, the Socialists responded to the call with practical unanimity, not, indeed, knowing clearly why the country was going to fight, but accepting the Government's assurance that the object in view was to repel Russian attacks and to ward off the menace of Slavism. In a collective statement read on their behalf before the division was taken, Deputy Haase said :

The victory of Russian despotism, stained by the blood of the best of Russia's sons, would be an overwhelming menace to our nation and its future liberty. This danger must be averted and the culture and independence of our own land must be preserved. For that reason we shall not leave the fatherland in the lurch.

For the Socialists the war, in its initial stages, was thus one with Russian despotism, and in responding to the Chancellor's appeal they were acting in the spirit of their leader Bebel, who declared in 1907, "The Russian Czardom is the mortal enemy of all European culture, and therefore of German democracy, and if ever there is a war against it the German Social Democrats will as a matter of course take their part." At that time the Socialists believed that their comrades in the Allied countries would place fellowship with them before

patriotism—in fact, the German Socialists were to fight for their country, but the French and British Socialists were to betray theirs!—just as Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg supposed that Great Britain would desert her friends for Germany's sake.

The fallacy of such a calculation was soon discovered ; directly the tocsin of war sounded the French Socialists thought more about Alsace-Lorraine than the International, and the working classes of Great Britain rallied to the support of Germany's first victim, Belgium. That spectacle led the German Socialists to take stock of their position, and to give a willing ear to the story, by this time sedulously exploited by the Government and its tools in the Press, that the war was really Great Britain's war, and that her object was no less than the destruction of German trade and industry and the annexation of Germany's colonial empire. Thereupon the violent and almost frenetic hatred of Russia as the embodiment of absolutism, which had characterized the German Socialists for a generation, suddenly abated, and the party was split into two wings, the Right and the Left. The Socialists of the Right advocated a *rapprochement* with the traditional enemy in the East, while that of the Left, among whose members were and are Bernstein, Eduard Fischer, and Erdmann, all, it is interesting to note, Revisionists—advocated as before reconciliation with France and Great Britain, as the pioneers of European Liberalism.

So strongly impressed are the Socialists of the Right by the economic aspects of the present struggle that in leaning towards Russia they disregard all political considerations, and are influenced only by the fact of the commercial dependence of Germany and Russia upon one another and the absence between them of that deep-seated mercantile and colonial rivalry which has unhappily embittered Anglo-German relationships in the past.

All these are signs that cannot with safety be ignored. Directly the war is over Germany, I repeat, will make desperate attempts to find political friends, and she will succeed, whatever the price that has to be paid. The



more truculent of her journalists are constantly assuring us that if the world does not love Germany she does not care, that Germans want no nation's friendship or favour, and that for the future they will go their own way. That is sheer bluff. No nation in the world more values friendship than the Germans, very curious though their ways of proving it often are. The reserve, aloofness and proud love of isolation, which are responsible for some of the best as for some of the worst qualities of the Englishman, are not German at all. The Englishman is always at heart an individualist, even more than the Frenchman. The German is gregarious, and can only live happily in association; in spite of all his nationalist extravagances and his spread-eagle patriotism, he also pays great regard, in normal times and conditions, to the opinion and attitude of his neighbours. His deepest instincts and the whole trend of his mentality will, therefore, drive him to restore as speedily as possible the broken relationships, wherever this is practicable.

Foreign friendships are also Germany's need. The capacity of her statesmen for credulity and fantastic scheming is as boundless as their capacity for intrigue has proved to be, and I confess that nothing in the way of conciliatory advances in any promising direction would surprise me. It may be that one of Germany's first serious peace moves will be an attempt to win back Russia. Frankly, it is well worth her while, since no other Power is so able to render to her good or evil. Moreover, such a *rapprochement* would be in the tradition of Prussian policy ever since the time of Frederick the Great, who said, "One of the first political principles is to endeavour to become an ally of that neighbour who may become most dangerous. For that reason we have an alliance with Russia, and thus we have our back free so long as it lasts." The mind which tries to contemplate Europe as it will be fifty years hence sees stretching from the Vistula deep into Asia a gigantic empire, teeming with population, of colossal resources and boundless wealth, and wielding a political power only second to that of Greater Britain. A hundred

years ago the population of the Russian Empire was forty-five millions, or less than that of the United Kingdom to-day; half a century later it had grown to seventy-four millions; it is to-day over a hundred and eighty millions; and fifty years hence will in all probability see the total increased to a figure approaching, even if it should not exceed, three hundred millions. All this vast population will inhabit an undivided dominion; for Russia does not colonize; her people, like her Empire, is one and integral. In the meantime her national development will have kept pace with the increase of her inhabitants, and both politically and intellectually her influence will be world-wide in a sense now inconceivable.

What chance would Germany, or the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires together, have against a Power of such magnitude, should it then decide to push its way westward? Already the population of Russia is two and a quarter times that of Germany, which it exceeds by a hundred millions, and its natural increase is at least three-fold that of the neighbouring empire, the present yearly increase in European Russia alone exceeding that of all Germany by nearly one million and a quarter. There seems no reason to suppose that for a long time these ratios will change in Germany's favour. Russia has benefited hitherto by a very high birth-rate, and while it may be unlikely that this will continue, its reduction would long be counterbalanced by a fall in the death-rate. There is no reason to believe, therefore, that the net rate of increase will for many years diminish.

In Germany, on the other hand, it might appear that the high-water mark has already been passed; for while the birth-rate has steadily fallen for many years, so also has the death-rate, until at the present moment there seems no likelihood that the natural growth of population will continue at the old rate unless by the artificial encouragement of marriage and child-bearing, a project without great promise on a large scale in a country whose working-classes have been systematically taught by their trade union and political leaders that the best interests of their order are served by the restriction of families.

Looking even a few years ahead, therefore, it is plain that Germany must anticipate growing danger upon her eastern frontier. It is possible that we have witnessed the maximum efficiency of the German Army; it is not so with Russia, whose military resources are still only partially developed, and may one day make her a formidable antagonist for the strongest conceivable combination of European Powers. The more thoughtful leaders of German public opinion recognize this, and, fearing for the time when a recreated Muscovite Empire will arise in invincible strength, are asking themselves how best, if at all, it may be possible to appease the enemy and turn away his desire to avenge the reverses and humiliations of the present war.

To this end I believe Germany would be prepared to make great and unexpected sacrifices. Voices have already been raised in the Press urging that Russia should be allowed to settle herself in Constantinople on condition of her leaving Germany quiet in the North. It may be said that two are necessary to a bargain, and that Russia may not be a willing bargainer. As to that, we shall know more when the permanence or otherwise of the new political order in Russia has been decided. It cannot be doubted that the recent change of government has profoundly modified the Russian attitude on many questions relating to the settlement, and particularly on that of territorial adjustments. Official Russia is now no longer identified with the extreme demands of the dethroned Czar, and on her own avowal would be far easier to conciliate than was hitherto the case. The distinction drawn with such emphasis by the new Government between the German nation and its Emperor and his irresponsible advisers, and the early opportunity which it took to disavow a policy of aggressive annexation, are facts full of significance. They certainly justify the conclusion that in the peace negotiations Russia's influence will be thrown powerfully on the side of moderation.

Here, however, we enter ground more than usually speculative. For the present the future of Russia is

a great interrogation. The comparative ease with which the Czardom was succeeded by a democratic *régime*, which has since assumed the form of a republic, the apparent willingness of the nation, in so far as it has hitherto been vocal, to accept the change, the general acquiescence of the army in the field, from the high command down to the common soldiers, and the comparative success with which the new Government has hitherto held its own, are remarkable facts which cannot be lightly ignored in any calculations as to the possibility of reaction. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the conditions are altogether abnormal; for a nation at death-grips with a powerful enemy serious internal strife would have been fatal; and, moreover, the Czar and the Court had earned the distrust of all patriotic sections of the nation, without respect of parties. It remains to be seen whether the democratic instinct is stronger in the Russian nation than the traditional reverence for monarchy and the dynasty, and that question will be decided not by the populations of a few large towns, but by Russia's eighty million peasants and rural labourers.<sup>1</sup>

The war, it is true, has exposed the rottenness of bureaucracy and bureaucratic government in Russia. But the same thing occurred in Prussia at the beginning of last century, and nevertheless the old Prussian system, though for a time deemed to have been fatally discredited, was resuscitated, and it has continued in spirit until the present day. And if it could be conclusively proved that a majority of the Russian nation to-day favoured republicanism, the fact would not necessarily determine the political future of the country; for while hands vote, brains everywhere rule, and nowhere more than in countries of undeveloped political education.

If one thing more than another is likely to encourage scepticism as to the stability of the new order amongst those who distrust a political progress that advances by leaps and bounds, it is the thoroughness with which the new Government is going about its task. It is

<sup>1</sup> European Russia only.

possible that the very honesty and consistency of its endeavours to make the democratic system genuine may prove its undoing. For in politics because a thing is logical it does not follow that it should be done : usually just the reverse is the case. But the Russian Government is engaged in creating an ideal commonwealth on perfect principles, forgetting that the ideal commonwealth, at least in constitution, is a commonwealth without ideals, and that the form of government best suited to a nation is that which is found by actual experience to reflect most faithfully its traditions, its genius, and its needs.

It is obvious, therefore, that the question, What if the Czar—the late one or another—should return? is fateful with possibilities, not least for our own country. Obviously the question will not be determined by the preferences and sympathies of Western nations, however sincere and generous. The Allied Governments have welcomed the new Executive handsomely and with *empressement*, and they could not have done otherwise, for where, in such a predicament, decision has to be taken, temporizing is impossible ; it is a question of all or nothing. The generality of people, freed from responsibility, have shown greater reserve. They have, indeed, like Washington's officers, put cockades of red in their hats, and saluted the republican flag discreetly and decorously, all in perfect sincerity ; yet amongst themselves they have confessed with a certain embarrassment their apprehension as to what the future may bring forth. It is an awkward thing to be welcoming the new heir, however much one may like him, when one does not know for certain that the testator is dead. And in regard to the monarchy, and even the dethroned dynasty, it cannot be said with certainty that Holy Russia has as yet issued an official certificate of death. Only when that has been done will the world breathe freely.

Meantime, Germany has adopted a circumspect attitude towards the new Russian Government, not convinced that Russia herself has spoken the last word on

the subject. It is an easy game for an enemy to play, and it is also a safe one. German diplomacy in the war has not hitherto been conspicuous for skill and prescience, but on this occasion it has so far made discreet use of an obvious advantage. Should events play into Germany's hands, and the Romanoffs, or even the monarchy, be revived at some future day, her present attitude of reserve and non-committal may prove of the utmost importance for the relationships of the two countries. In this connection two capital facts should be borne in mind : first, that it would be the object of a victorious Germany to set the Czardom again upon its feet, for the system of dynastic foreign policies would flourish in Berlin as never since the reign of Frederick William IV ; and, second, that while it is to the interest of Great Britain that Russia should develop as a European Power, Germany's interests demand that she should be induced to turn her gaze more and more towards Asia.

At the time of writing Russia is in the throes of re-organization and reconstruction. What her present Allies, and least of all Great Britain, dare not do is to desert her in this hour of trial. Apart from the sanctity of their obligations, such a proceeding might bring about a heavy retribution at some future time, for it would justify in both republicans and monarchists bitter and permanent resentment and afford them a common ground of hostility to Western Europe. Even if the immediate effect were to encourage Germany to adopt extreme measures against Russia, it is probable that that country would willingly abandon all her territorial spoils directly there seemed a reasonable prospect of a renewal of friendship. We may be sure that the lesson of the Prusso-Austrian peace of 1866 has not been forgotten by the statesmen of Berlin. For this reason the view favoured by some Western publicists, that it could only be good for the rest of Europe if after the war some acute sore remained between Russia and Germany, since Russia would sooner or later be able to look after herself, appears open to the gravest doubt. It is not to Germany's interest that such a sore should exist, and it is extremely unlikely that it would be allowed to continue a day longer than was necessary.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FUTURE OF ALSACE-LORRAINE

"Their (the Prussians') present policy is one more example, after so many others, of the insolent and blind folly of victors who sow the seeds of war at the moment they are making peace."—*M. Guizot, letter of March 4, 1871.*

"If peace should prove lasting, we shall have made a mistake in taking Alsace and Lorraine from you, for these provinces will give us trouble."—*Prince Bismarck to Marquis de Gabrine, August 13, 1871.*

"My opinion certainly is that the transfer of territory and inhabitants by mere force calls for the reprobation of Europe, and that Europe is entitled to utter it, and can utter it with good effect."—*Mr. Gladstone, in a letter to Mr. John Bright, October 1, 1870, quoted in John (Lord) Morley's "Life of Gladstone," vol. ii., p. 346.*

"It would have been a great security for Germany herself and for the peace of Europe if the neutral Powers had bound themselves not only to prevent excessive demands on the part of Germany, but also not to participate either actively or passively in any French enterprise of revenge."—*Count Beust, "Memoirs," vol. ii., p. 209.*

"No peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that Governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from potentate to potentate as if they were property."—*President Wilson, in the United States Senate, January 22, 1917.*

THE Allied nations are agreed in demanding, and neutral nations are united in expecting, important territorial changes in the event of the war going against the Central Powers, though in both cases the utmost variety of opinion prevails as to the measures which are deemed desirable and practicable. It is obvious that dogmatic statement upon this subject would be absurdly out of place. Already not a few forecasts of the course of events, which were confidently made at an early stage of the war, have proved hopelessly out of date, and survive only as illustrations of the danger of prophecy.

In discussing these territorial questions, therefore, all that the writer hopes to do is to contribute towards discrimination in public opinion, by bringing together the capital facts of the problems involved, and by throwing light upon certain aspects of these problems which, if one may judge by the temper of much literature of the day, are, either by accident or design, escaping attention. To bring the problems into an atmosphere of impartiality is the first condition of seeing them in a true perspective, and an endeavour to do that, with whatever degree of success, needs no apology. The ground will be cleared and the writer's standpoint be sufficiently indicated if several propositions are first put forward by way of suggestion as to the lines which coming territorial adjustments might reasonably be expected to follow, leaving the practical application of these propositions to be discussed in separate chapters :

(1) It should be the object of the settlement to assist, as far as may be possible in existing circumstances, in the satisfaction of long-standing national aspirations and rightful national claims, subject always to the condition that no community should be transferred to a new allegiance against its will as ascertained by *plébiscite*. While, however, due regard should be paid to the accepted facts of history, it should be recognized that history cannot be remade *ab initio*, and accordingly full consideration should be given to present conditions : above all, care should be taken that in removing existing hardships and injustices new grievances of the same or a different kind are not created. In their reply to the Note of the United States Government of December 19, 1916, the Allied Governments asserted one of their objects to be " the restitution of provinces or territories formerly torn from the Allies by force or contrary to the wishes of their inhabitants." Territorial treaties concluded at the expense of subject races, and particularly such treaties as have resulted from fraud or conquest, must always be subject to reconsideration, but it is a demand of equity that in the event of their



being revised due weight should be given to present facts and to the interests of all the States and peoples concerned, and not only of those which may hope to gain by any proposed change. How far back may the doctrine of restitution be properly applied? Or is there no statute of limitations at all in the case of violent annexations? In that event not a few European Powers must be held to occupy certain of their territories upon a very fragile tenure.

(2) The idea of dismembering or unduly weakening States whose existence is necessary to civilization should be repudiated as at variance with the one great purpose of the war which is supposed to be common to all the Allies, viz. the assertion of the right of homogeneous communities or groups to live their own lives.

(3) Just expression should be given to the principle of national expansion in general, in forms suited to the needs and conditions of the States concerned. This object would embrace the question of German colonization.

(4) As to the Balkans, the paramount object should be to strengthen existing States, and to make sufficiently strong to exist as independent units any new States or federation of States which might be created. Nevertheless, the Congress Powers would for a long time need to stand jointly in a foster-relationship to the whole of the Balkan communities, being responsible for the maintenance of peace amongst them and for their protection from outside aggression.

(5) In all territorial rearrangements out of Europe there should be the fullest possible extension of the principle of the "open door," and the opportunity should be seized of applying the principle to European protectorates in Asia and Africa which are not otherwise affected by the settlement.

(6) The settlement should carry with it the termination of all existing treaties of alliance, and should not expose any of the Allied Powers to new risks and liabilities at variance with the hope and expectation of the nations that from the war shall issue a durable peace. In

the matter of annexations in particular the principle for which Castlereagh fought at the Congress of Vienna, viz. that no Power should take away from the Congress more territory than it was in a position to keep, should be constantly kept in view. It follows that the settlement should not be built upon the shifting foundations of political and military alliances and "diplomatic groups," but proceed from the assumption that the present system of balance of power and equilibrium will, in Mr. Asquith's words, give place to a "real European partnership."

Tentative though some of these propositions are, it may be held that they suggest lines upon which, given the decisive victory of the Allies, a large amount of valuable constructive work for the future would be possible, and that even if in the end the settlement should have to be wholly a settlement by consent they might afford the opportunity of agreement upon many points of vital importance if Europe is in the future to organize herself for peace as she has in the past organized herself for war.

For France the question which, next to the organization of victory, outweighs all others in the war is the future status of Alsace-Lorraine. It is a question surrounded by all sorts of difficulties, however, and the statesmen who should succeed in finding for it a solution acceptable to the past and present possessors of the disputed territories would render to Europe a service of incalculable value. In discussing a question of such moment, and at the same time of so much delicacy, the utmost circumspection is desirable, but it is no less essential to face the facts of the problem honestly and courageously. To ignore or gloss over any vital factors in the case simply because they are inconvenient will hinder rather than help the cause of a durable settlement.

It is not necessary to dwell at length upon the earlier facts of the history of Alsace and Lorraine, since they go back to centuries too remote to have any appre-

ciable bearing on the problem as it exists to-day, and moreover they favour the claims of Germany and France equally. Originally part of the Carolingian Empire, the two territories were fated for a long time to go apart. In 843 Lothar, the eldest son and successor of the Emperor Lewis, agreed to divide the Empire with his two brothers, and the partition was made by the Treaty of Verdun. Lothar received, together with the imperial title, the central kingdom, consisting of a stretch of territory extending from the North Sea to the Mediterranean, including northern Italy, and called after him Lotharingia or Lorraine; the western kingdom (France) fell to Charles the Bald, and the eastern (Germany) to Lewis. In the succeeding century Alsace and Lorraine became part of the German Empire, though later Lorraine was created an independent duchy under its own rulers.

France obtained a definite footing in Alsace in the middle of the seventeenth century. During the Thirty Years' War, when the German Protestant Princes were in sore straits in their struggle with the Roman Catholic Emperor, Louis XIII, in consideration of his placing a small army at their disposal and paying a subsidy to their war chest, was allowed to occupy the larger part of the province until peace should be restored, so affording it a protection which it was no longer within Germany's power to give. Peace was not to be concluded by the Princes without the consent of France and of Sweden, through whose King, Gustavus Adolphus, the transfer of territory was negotiated. The arrangement was embodied in the Treaty of Paris of November 1, 1634. When in 1648 the war ended with the Peace of Westphalia, Louis XIV refused to give back the territory which France had thus occupied only provisionally, and insisted upon the formal cession to him of Austria's suzerain rights therein, making in return a money payment; but Strassburg was expressly excluded from this cession.

Thus, as Freeman said of a later French ruler, in relation to his acquisition of Nice and Savoy, Louis

had, for half a day's work, taken two days' pay. While in this way converting a temporary occupation into a formal suzerainty, Louis confirmed the imperial cities of Alsace in all the rights and franchises which they had enjoyed under the Emperors. Hence the acquisition of Alsace did not in the first instance imply the complete territorial absorption of the country in France. Only in later years did Louis and his successors nibble, bit by bit, at the local rights still reserved to the Alsatians, until in the end a position of fiefdom had been converted into one of complete political dependence and fusion.

During the seven centuries that it was part of the German Empire, the civilization and institutions, the spirit and thought of the people, had become Germanized. Life in the old Empire was the more tolerable since the country was split up into more or less autonomous areas; within it were a number of independent Princes of the Empire; and many cities and districts enjoyed far-going powers of self-government, with valuable special rights and franchises, subject to the merely nominal suzerainty of the Emperor. These traditions of autonomy were gradually effaced, though in destroying them France was careful not to interfere unduly with the social life and habits of the people. It was not until 1681, however, that Strassburg, the capital of the province, passed into French hands, owing to the treachery of the Bishop-Prince von Fürstenberg. With its transference Old Germany lost one of the fairest of her cities, for Strassburg was German alike in its architecture, culture, and the spirit of its population. It had been a residence of the German Emperors in the Middle Ages; for a thousand years it had been part of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation; it had been privileged to see its banner carried next after that of the Empire; with its annexation, therefore, part of the life-blood of Old Germany may be said to have henceforth flowed in Gallic veins. For still another hundred years the nibbling process continued, and only after the Revolution did the last traces of

local autonomy and independence disappear in Alsace. It was in relation to Alsace that Ranke said during the war of 1870, "We are fighting Louis XIV."

The stages through which Lorraine passed need not be traced in the same detail. France made her first encroachments in the duchy by the seizure of the territorial bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, in the middle of the sixteenth century, and the duchy ultimately became French as the marriage dowry of the wife of Louis XV: to that extent the title of France to possession was far stronger than in the case of Alsace. Except in the eastern districts, Lorraine also was always more French than Alsace, and so it remains down to the present day, in spite of all attempts to supplant the early Gallic culture.

It is to be noted that when, on the fall of Napoleon, the territories which he had annexed in Germany and elsewhere were again taken from France an attempt was made by the German Princes to obtain the restitution to Germany of these two provinces. By the second Treaty of Paris of November 20, 1815, however, the Powers formally confirmed the French frontiers of 1790. The result was that except for the fact that Prussia acquired the north-eastern portion of Lorraine, with Saarlouis, and therewith the rich coal-basin which is to-day fiscal property, the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine remained from that time forward with France under the sanction of the public law of Europe.

During the first seventy years of the nineteenth century the disunion and consequent impotence of Germany made impossible any attempt to regain the lost territories, yet the hope of renewing the broken tie was never abandoned by the nation at large, though, on the other hand, the desire to return to the country from which it had been separated became gradually weaker in Alsace, and in Lorraine disappeared altogether. Meantime, France had introduced into Alsace her culture, political ideas, and institutions, commencing all by a suave, unconscious pressure which was far more effective than open coercion. Under French rule the inhabitants were

undoubtedly happy, and they formed a warm and proud attachment to their new fatherland, whose strength seemed to contrast so favourably with the weakness of the German Empire, which, when unable to protect its own flesh and blood, had placed them in the foster-care of the stranger.

Nevertheless, the subconscious life of the Alsatians still to a large extent remained German, just as German continued to be the basis of the language of the common people, in spite of the infusion of French which entered into it, producing in the rural districts a *patois* as picturesque as that of the French Canadians. A nation's deepest feelings and its most intimate affinities are reflected by its popular poetry and song, and if it be true that Rouget de Lisle, of Strassburg, gave to France the "Marseillaise," some of the most popular of the older German folk-songs have as their theme the same Strassburg, while even to-day many of the tales and legends of rural Alsace breathe the unmistakable spirit of an old and outlived Germany of simple thought and quiet ways. It is probable that the essentially Germanic character of a large part of the population of Alsace at the present day to some extent explains the fact that its birth-rate approximates the rate of Germany as a whole, and is so much higher than that of France. The following figures, showing mean rates per 1,000 inhabitants for the ten years 1903-12, are instructive :

	Marriage-rate.	Birth-rate.	Death-rate.	Natural Increase.
Germany ... ..	7·9	31·7	17·9	13·8
Alsace-Lorraine...	7·2	26·5	17·4	9·1
France ... ..	7·8	20·0	19·1	0·9

The story of the reconquest of Alsace-Lorraine in the war of 1870 is too well known to need retelling. It cannot be doubted that from the beginning of the war the provinces were marked out as the spoils of victory.

Yet the German generals do not appear to have desired their recovery because of sentimental reasons; and Bismarck himself, in spite of his strong national feeling, made light of the plea for restitution on the ground of racial affinity and prior possession as a "professorial idea." The governing motives were military and strategic—the necessity, in the opinion of the generals, of giving to New Germany securer frontiers, of making any future attack by France more difficult, and of gaining for Germany a corresponding advantage in the event of her taking the offensive. That was the reason why the cession of Alsace was demanded as soon as the German armies had won such victories as made it humanly impossible that the tide of success could turn against them, and why, as the victories multiplied and the French power of resistance was more and more broken down, the demand for a part of Lorraine was added.

When the time came for the victors to dictate the terms of peace Alsace was the first trophy to be wrested from the helpless enemy. Over Lorraine there was a vehement diplomatic struggle. The portion demanded was that lying to the south of the Grand-duchy of Luxemburg, and bordered on the east by the Saar country, which fell to Prussia in 1815. Verdun, lying far behind the French frontier, was originally claimed, but the demand was not seriously pressed. The negotiation over Metz, a truly French city and the seat of a bishopric, was long and bitter, but in the end it had to go. Nevertheless, the German historian Professor Hans Delbrück holds that if M. Thiers had been more resolute in resistance he might have succeeded in keeping Metz as well, and he asserts that "there is no question at all that Bismarck personally would much rather have been satisfied with a language frontier."<sup>1</sup> Bismarck himself said the same thing to Count Beust when the two met at Gastein in 1871.<sup>2</sup> As it was, the annexation in Lorraine was carried out on no rational principle, but with sole regard for the contingency of another war.

<sup>1</sup> *Preussische Jahrbücher*, November 16, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> "Memoirs of Count Beust" (English translation), vol. ii., p. 260.

Belfort, in Alsace, was also to have passed into the victors' hands, but in the end M. Thiers was allowed to choose between its retention and a triumphal progress of the German troops through Paris: he naturally chose to keep this stronghold, yet at the same time he so skilfully timed the signing of the peace preliminaries that the military show upon which King William of Prussia had set his heart proved a fiasco.

Thus it was that, in the guise of a peace settlement, a territorial arrangement which had lasted more than two centuries, during which the populations concerned had settled down to French rule, was violently disturbed and the ground prepared for a future war. France acquiesced in the rape of her territory because she could not help herself, but before the transaction was formally ratified the thirty-eight deputies of the ceded departments uttered in the National Assembly at Bordeaux on March 1, 1871, a solemn protest, which was at the same time a prophecy of future restitution.

It is a matter of common knowledge how the drastic territorial penalty inflicted upon France at once changed the attitude of this country towards Germany. Public opinion had hitherto strongly favoured the German cause, for not only was it firmly believed that France had wantonly provoked the war—the falsification of the Ems telegram was not as yet known—but the revelation of the Benedetti-Bismarck draft treaty for the annexation by France of Belgium and Luxemburg had convinced the nation and its Government that Napoleon had been playing an underhand game. Germany's harsh treatment of a beaten foe created a complete revulsion of feeling. Many persons in influential position in this country did their utmost, both by public and private action, to induce the victors to show moderation in the hour of success and elation. Queen Victoria wrote a warm appeal to the King of Prussia, but received an evasive and discouraging reply. Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister, more French on this occasion than the Foreign Secretary, Lord Granville, was in favour of an active official protest, and only on the urgent opposition of his colleagues



did he desist from his design. With statesmanlike prescience, however, he saw that the seizure of the provinces would "lead us from bad to worse," and be "the beginning of a new series of European complications."<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, even upon the question of the annexations, Germany had also her friends, few in number, though every whit as vocal as her critics. Perhaps next to Carlyle the most uncompromising of them was the historian E. A. Freeman, whose strong anti-French bias had been vehemently excited by Napoleon's rash challenge to Prussia and to fate. "We must have Elsass back again, if not Lothringen," he wrote as early as August 22, 1870. "As for the people not liking it, it would surely be easier to bedutch (i.e. Germanize) them back again than it was to bewelsh (i.e. Gallicize) them before."

Germany's generals and statesmen needed no outside stimulus. France had been beaten, and to the victor belonged the spoils. Had some of the men in the high military command, like General von Blumenfeld, had their way, France would have been crushed beyond power of recovery for a century. On the other hand, the Grand-duke of Baden, the King of Prussia's son-in-law, did his utmost to dissuade his relative against the policy of annexation as one which would be sure to lead to future mischief. The counsels of force conquered, and whatever the historical rights of the question may have been, the violence done to French pride and sentiment made certain, sooner or later, a war of revindication. At the same time it is undoubtedly true that the German nation, sentimental to a degree, regarded the annexation as a return and a recovery, and the cession of Alsace in particular was intensely popular.

The irony of the situation lay in the fact that while the Germans wanted Alsace back, so that its population might be one again with the Germanic family from which it had been violently torn, the Alsatians showed little desire to return to a country which had done little for them in the past and had let them go without any

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Lord Granville, December 10, 1870.

apparent misgiving. This even Freeman, with all his enthusiasm for Germany, recognized at a later date. "The lands given up by the French people," he said in 1887, "were lands which the French people looked on, and in some ways truly looked on, as having become wholly French. An Italian land [Venice, ceded by Austria in 1866] is given back to Italy and it rejoices; a German land is given back to Germany and it does not rejoice."<sup>1</sup>

The territory taken from France, which received the name of *Reichsland*, or Imperial Province, consisted of nearly the whole of Alsace, as divided after the Revolution of 1789 into the departments of the Upper Rhine (Haut Rhin) (with the exception of the Belfort district as already stated), and the Lower Rhine (Bas Rhin), and about a third of Lorraine, including portions of the departments of the Moselle, Meurthe, and Vosges. The extent of the territory annexed was 5,600 square miles, and the population 1,560,000, of which number about two-thirds lived in Alsace.

It cannot be denied that during the German occupation Alsace-Lorraine has fully shared in the progress which has been general in the German Empire, and that there has been moral and material gain to the inhabitants in many directions. Both in town and country local government is far more methodical and rigid than of old, and this is not in accordance with the French temperament; but it is also unquestionably more efficient, and this the population has long ago acknowledged. In the larger towns in particular a system of administration comparable with that of the most progressive parts of the Empire has taken the place of one which beforetime was notoriously lax and weak, and whose principal recommendation was that it allowed both the administrators and the people administered to do pretty much as they liked. Many of the towns have been rebuilt, not all indeed on æsthetic lines, but on a scale that speaks of substantial prosperity. There is a better system of education than there was before, though here, again, efficiency has been

<sup>1</sup> "Fifty Years of European History," p. 53.

counterbalanced by an excess of red tape and "regimentation"; the resources of the provinces have been developed as never before under French rule; the railway, canal, and road systems have been greatly improved; the general level of material well-being has been raised; and though labour is still far worse off in Alsace than in the north of Germany, in the towns it is better paid, trade for trade, than in French towns of corresponding size and character.

Nevertheless, Germany has failed to win the attachment of the population in general. That the Lorrainers or even the Alsations would, in any circumstances, speedily become reconciled to German rule was impossible; the unsympathetic methods of government adopted, however, might have been deliberately devised to make any such reconciliation impossible. Had the provinces been attached to Bavaria or Baden, as was suggested in 1871, they would at least have been well treated, and they might in the end have accepted their lot. What happened was the next worst thing to incorporating them in Prussia; for Prussian officials have from first to last governed Alsace-Lorraine, which means that they have governed its people, not as fellow-subjects, but as a conquered and alien element in the Empire. The excesses of the imported soldiery at Zabern (Saverne) in December, 1913, which scandalized all Germany, were a rude reminder of the deep gulf which still divided the original Alsations from the rest of Germany.

What is the position of this question to-day? Wantonly attacked by an enemy who had long watched her national regeneration with ill-concealed displeasure, as almost a crime committed against himself, France from the first made it clear that for her the present war must end with the restitution to her of the lost provinces. The decisive voice of the French people, the authorized pledge given by General Joffre to the Alsations early in the war, and immediately afterwards endorsed by President Poincaré, and the later reiterated declarations of the French Government, both in Parliament and in diplomatic Notes, have left no doubt whatever about the solidarity

of French sentiment upon this point. The statement made in the House of Deputies by the Premier so lately as June 5, 1917, is the latest and perhaps the most emphatic official utterance upon the question. Speaking in support of a resolution (later adopted by 453 votes against 55) calling for the return of the lost territories, M. Ribot said :

The resolution rejects all policy of conquest and subjection. It is under such a policy that we ourselves suffered forty-five years ago, and to-day our revenge is not the revenge of oppression, but the revenge of liberty and justice. We will have back those provinces which never ceased to be French. In 1790 they gave themselves of their own free will to France, and since then they have lived the life of France. We ask for no annexation ; we demand restitution.

It is obvious, therefore, that if it falls to the Allies to impose their own terms of peace, it will be for France to decide what shall be their demand upon this question. In the present war France has achieved marvellous feats of martial valour and endurance, of which even her greatest admirers hardly believed her capable ; she has covered herself with glory and honour, and has given to the world, alike by the heroism of her fighters and the sacrifice and fortitude of her civilian population, evidence of an indomitable will, a triumphant patriotism, and a true spiritual renaissance. There can be no Englishmen who would not rejoice to see her rewarded by the complete and unconditional restoration of the territories which were torn from her in 1871. Nevertheless, France can be under no doubt as to the magnitude of the responsibility which such a restoration, if effected purely by force, must impose upon her. She knows that the act would evoke across the Rhine just the same passionate protests which she herself has never ceased to utter for half a century. For if there existed amongst Germans in 1870, as there did, a genuine conviction that the annexation of Alsace was merely the return of a lost territory to its rightful owners, the recognition of this territory as an integral part of Germany has become

part of the national sentiment during the succeeding years. Except under force, therefore, the German nation would no more agree to acknowledge as binding the cession of the whole Imperial Province than did the protesting deputies of the French National Assembly in 1871, and whatever undertaking it might be induced to give would be regarded, like the vote of that Assembly, as subject to the mental reservation that as soon as time and circumstances permitted the French occupation would be challenged.

Upon no question raised by the war is German national sentiment so unanimous as upon this. No political party has on the whole opposed the idea of annexations so vigorously and consistently as the Social Democrats, yet this party has from the first proclaimed its resolution to resist to the last any corresponding restriction of Germany's existing frontiers. It is worth while quoting some words of the Socialist deputy Herr Scheidemann upon the question of Alsace-Lorraine. Before the war Scheidemann was one of the bitterest opponents of the Imperial Government and most of the things for which it stood, more particularly the existing political system and militarism. Like the majority of the members of his party, he has put away his intransigent Socialism in the presence of the crisis through which his country is passing, and while it is true that he has of late acted almost as an unofficial mouthpiece of Ministerial war views and aims, he still represents a strong section of the Socialist parliamentary group.

Do you suppose (he said in the Imperial Diet some months ago) that the war would be really over if a peace, concluded in thoughtless haste, gave up Alsace and Lorraine? Social Democracy not only opposes annexations on the part of Germany; it also opposes them on the part of the enemies of Germany, because fresh wars would be sure to arise out of every conquest. If on the 1st of February we signed a treaty giving up those provinces, then on February 2nd we should begin our preparations for another war in order to reconquer them.

Seldom in the history of German parliamentary Socialism has a Socialist spoken for public opinion, but it is certain that these words reflect the attitude of the nation at large.

It is questionable whether upon this or any other question of the war the German attitude is any better understood in France than the French attitude in Germany. Where that is so, the outsider, however good his intentions, can hardly hope to enter sufficiently into the mentality and sentiment of the two nations concerned to be able to gauge the strength of their avowed determination to stake everything, present and future, upon the one issue of the possession of Alsace-Lorraine, much less to decide between the rival claims. What an outsider may do, however, and perhaps do with advantage, is to state the facts of both sides of the problem as impartially as possible, and leave the matter there. Certainly no writer conscious of a sense of responsibility will dare to touch this most difficult question without pointing to the grave danger of any solution which deliberately excludes negotiation and compromise, and least of all will one whose sympathies are entirely on the side of France in the present war be guilty of so inexcusable an omission.

It must be obvious that historical argument alone cannot determine the issue. Each nation is equally convinced that the facts of history are altogether on its side and against its rival. France logically refuses to regard her claim to Alsace and Lorraine as a claim to alien territory; what to Germany would be an act of annexation is to her one of simple restitution. Germany replies that before the territories were taken by France they formed part of the old German Empire, and were gained by force and stealth when the Empire was too weak to offer resistance. It is impossible to reconcile these two standpoints, and where neither side is prepared to give way even discussion of them is futile.

Granting that the seizure of Alsace and part of Lorraine in 1871 was, from the standpoint of statesmanship, a

gross blunder—and out of Germany few people to-day think otherwise—the fact remains that both countries must share responsibility for it. Neither of them can be allowed to pick out of history the facts that seem to support its case and ignore the rest. France took the provinces in the seventeenth century, and unfortunately from the time of so doing did her utmost to incite in the German nation the desire for retaliation. A presentation of the relations of the two countries which begins only with the spoliation of 1871 and ignores the repeated French devastations of the Palatinate, the sack of Heidelberg, and the crushing and partition of Prussia and Germany by Napoleon lacks a due sense of proportion. On the other hand, the case of France is greatly strengthened by the fact that the Powers in 1815, while depriving France of recent enlargements of territory, resolutely refused to reopen the question of Alsace and Lorraine, and decided that these provinces should remain with her.

But historical and political considerations represent only one aspect of the problem. An even more fundamental question, which is too often overlooked, or if asked is pushed aside with a few generalities, is the probable attitude of the population of Alsace and Lorraine on the question of restitution. Is it safe to assume that the present inhabitants, or a majority of them, would welcome a change of rule? In considering this question it is essential to allow for the fact that the existing status has now been in existence for nearly half a century, a period which in modern times means far more for the transformation of social conditions and relationships than the whole of the slow and easy-going two centuries which preceded the annexation. Moreover, would it be legitimate to conclude from the prevalence of discontent with German rule that there exists on the part of the disaffected part of the population generally the wish to cast it away?

I do not believe that the data exist which would justify any one in speaking dogmatically upon this question. One naturally calls to mind the political organiza-

tion of the Alsatians and their votes in parliamentary elections. From the first their deputies in the Imperial Diet formed a separate party, known as the "Alsatians," originally as a party of pure protest and later as voicing the demand for autonomy. The success of this party at the polls has been as follows at the recurring general elections: the figures should be considered in relation to the proportions of all qualified electors who (a) voted and (b) abstained from voting on each occasion:

NUMBER OF VOTES RECORDED AND DEPUTIES ELECTED BY THE ALSATIAN PARTY.

Elections.	Proportions of all Qualified Electors of Alsace-Lorraine who—		Number of Votes.	Number of Deputies.
	(a) Voted.	(b) Abstained from Voting.		
	Per cent.	Per cent.		
1874	76·4	23·6	234,500	15
1877	64·2	35·8	200,000	10
1878	65·1	34·9	178,900	11
1881	55·0	45·0	153,000	15
1884	58·2	41·8	165,600	15
1887	83·3	16·7	233,700	15
1890	60·4	39·6	101,100	10
1893	76·4	23·6	114,700	8
1898	67·9	32·1	107,400	10
1903	77·3	22·7	101,900	10
1907	87·3	12·7	103,600	7
1912	84·9	15·1	162,000	9

Whatever be the significance of these figures, however, it should be remembered that they are affected by the large amount of French emigration and the perhaps larger amount of German immigration which have taken place during the German occupation, and particularly during the early years.

Speaking with only a limited knowledge of Alsace, I should nevertheless hazard the opinion that, amongst the indigenes, the feeling towards France is far more cordial in the conservative rural districts than in the towns, and in both amongst the professional and leisured classes than amongst the commercial and labouring classes.



I have within quite recent years conversed with influential Alsatians in the towns who heartily accepted the new status and had abandoned any desire for its disturbance, but also with others who were as French in sympathy as before the annexation, and who hated the name of the country in which they still regarded themselves as strangers. How far special circumstances, if known, would explain this difference of attitude I am not prepared to say. It is certain, however, that a lingering tradition of bitter animosity may often be found in families whose sons exiled themselves in 1871 rather than accept an odious citizenship which might have bound them to take up arms against their true fatherland.

It is likely that a large section of the old French Alsatians would gladly go back to an allegiance which they have never formally repudiated, and this can undoubtedly be said of the people of Lorraine, except those of the eastern districts, even more confidently. On the other hand, many of the old German families, who, though happy under French rule, were drawn by sympathy rather eastward than westward, and most of the later immigrants from other parts of the German Empire, would resist the idea of transference. It cannot be doubted also that even among the inhabitants to whom German rule is irksome and galling there are many who would rather bear the ills they have than accept a future in which they would be haunted by anxiety. It is just amongst the more thoughtful and more prosperous sections of the community that this attitude would chiefly be found—the class which respects order and values stability and has a material interest in so doing. One may judge their attitude as one will, yet it is probable that many such people would be prepared to sacrifice personal and national predilections rather than run the risk of seeing their country involved once again in a revolution of such far-reaching importance, with all its attendant dislocations and acrimonies, in the absence of an absolute guarantee that the change would be final.

The advocates of no compromise say that all that

would be necessary in order to make the new tenure secure would be for the Allies who are now fighting against Germany to enter into a joint undertaking to maintain France in possession. Nevertheless, it would be unwise to overlook the fact that an entirely new element has entered into European relationships with the establishment of republicanism in Russia and the avowal of the new Government there of its determination to abandon the foreign policy of the overturned autocracy and to renounce complicity in imperialistic enterprises for the future. At the present moment there seems no likelihood whatever that New Russia will enter into any sort of alliance or undertaking which would pledge her to military operations, even in the remotest contingency.

Meantime, it would be inexcusable to ignore the declarations recently made by the Presidents of the two Chambers of the Diet of the provinces and endorsed, according to newspaper reports, by a large majority of the members. Speaking at the opening of the Diet on June 5, 1917, the newly elected President of the Lower House, Dr. Ricklin, said :

We bless every proceeding calculated to shorten even for a day the misery of war, and regret everything done, ostensibly in order to change our lot, which prolongs the war and with it our sufferings. The overwhelming majority of the people of Alsace-Lorraine did not wish for this or any other war. All they wanted was to build up the Province in the position assigned to it by public law, as a part of the German Empire, and for the rest to follow their peaceful work. In this respect the war has for us altered nothing. We make this confession openly and before all the world. May it be heard everywhere, and may peace be soon vouchsafed to us !

On the same occasion the President of the First Chamber, Dr. Hoeffel, stated :

Alsace-Lorraine has no more urgent wish than that it may remain as it is. . . . Fate led us again to Germany in 1871.

We are closely bound to Germany economically, ethnologically, and in language, and we are convinced that for Alsace-Lorraine an advantageous peaceful future can only be hoped for in union with the German Empire, to which we remain faithful.

It may be said that these declarations, made "in the presence of the Stadholder and the entire Government of Alsace-Lorraine," owed something to good stage management, and were intended to be an official reply to the French war aims, yet the fact remains that the Chambers to which they were addressed are as representative as legislative bodies could well be.

The question here raised is for France one of immense and even tragic moment, for the tenure of territories which might be challenged at any moment would impose upon her military burdens far more exhausting than those of the past. It is, therefore, apprehension for France rather than sympathy with German claims that is behind the attitude of those who look to the possibility of a compromise by which Germany would give back her present share of Lorraine, together with all those districts of Alsace whose inhabitants have never ceased to be French in language, thought, and life, and who might signify a wish to resume the old allegiance.

As regards the larger province, no purely political or geographical objections to frontier adjustments that could be advanced on Germany's part would be likely to carry conviction to impartial minds. For example, the objection that to cut off parts of Alsace would do violence to the unity of the province is answered by the fact that even now the whole of old Alsace does not fall within the German Empire, so that to add to the portions which still remain in French possession, so long as the language boundary was adhered to, would violate no fundamental principle. Broadly, French is predominantly the "mother language" of the people of all the western districts of German Lorraine (except in the extreme north), where proportions of the inhabitants varying from 70 to over 90 per cent. are French-speaking, and of a

few of the north-western districts of Alsace, where the same high ratios are found.

Of German Lorraine it may be said that the culture of France has given to it a stamp at least as distinctive as that of Germany in the adjoining province. Metz in particular is as truly French as Strassburg is German. Moreover, the portion of Lorraine detached in 1871 was appropriated on no rational principle beyond the assumed necessities of military strategy, and almost it might be said that encroachment upon Lorraine at all was accidental and an afterthought. Bismarck would have allowed France to retain Metz on condition of its ceasing to be a fortress, and this condition might still be insisted on.

It is true that serious economic difficulties stand in the way of the retrocession of German Lorraine, and though they cannot be said to offer an insuperable obstacle, they should be fairly faced. Small as was the part played by Lorraine in the industrial life of Germany in 1871, its economic importance for the Empire is now incalculable. The explanation of this fact must be sought in the boundless wealth which nature has hoarded in the minette or iron-ore fields of German and French Lorraine and the adjacent Luxemburg. Before the present war about two-thirds of the entire minette mining area were in French hands. Virtually the whole of French Lorraine is ore-producing, and between the two parts of the old duchy there was a large amount of reciprocal dealing. French ironmasters own important interests in German Lorraine, and German ironmasters still larger interests across the frontier, insomuch that the minette mines and the smelting works connected therewith have afforded a unique example of the internationalization of industry and capital.

As late as 1870 these minette mines, now of such great importance, were viewed with comparative indifference, for owing to its high phosphoric content the ore was of inferior quality, and its commercial value was proportionately low. At the present day the value of the Lorraine minette ore in its raw state is not

half that of the purer ore mined in Westphalia. It cannot be said, therefore, that material considerations played a great part in the annexation of German Lorraine, since the extent and value of its natural wealth had hardly been suspected. It is well for France that this was the case, or her loss of territory might have been greater. There were, indeed, a few men in France who even then foresaw the potential importance of the industrial interests which would be sacrificed if Eastern Lorraine passed into alien hands, but Frenchmen in general do not appear to have been fully conscious of the extent to which their industrial interests were involved by the cession. The output of iron in France at that time was relatively small; Great Britain headed the list of pig-iron producing countries, and Germany was still struggling far behind.

It was the discovery of the Thomas-Gilchrist (basic) process of extracting the phosphorus from the iron ore in the process of smelting—a process which incidentally yielded a by-product of high manurial value for agriculture, in the form of slack—that gave to the Lorraine minette fields their great value. With the application of this method Lorraine sprang into fame and attracted envious eyes from Westphalia and the other centres of the German iron industry. There was at once a great increase in the number of mines, blast furnaces, steel and hammer works, rolling mills, steel and iron foundries, and the like, and Lorraine on both sides of the Franco-German frontier, as well as the iron district of Luxemburg, entered upon an industrial career of great prosperity. For Germany, indeed, her Lorraine iron-ore fields have since become of vital importance, since, owing to the rapid exhaustion of her stores of superior ore, she is more and more dependent upon the mines there and upon the foreign supplies upon which all the rest of the world, England included, is drawing. The official German statistics of iron-ore production divide the Empire into eighteen districts, and the production of the Lorraine minette mining district in 1910 was between two and three times as large as that of all the

other districts put together. The relative importance of the Lorraine iron-ore field will be seen from the following figures for that year :

OUTPUT OF RAW IRON ORE.

	German Empire.	Lorraine District Alone.
Number of mines in working ...	340	46
Output of iron ore in raw state ...	22,964,800 metric tons	16,652,000 metric tons = 72.5 %
Estimated quantity of iron ...	6,940,400 "	4,789,900 " = 69.0 %
Value at mines (in marks) ...	92,272,000 M.	45,155,000 M. = 48.9 %

It is not too much to say that the future of the German iron and steel and metal industries, upon which the industrial prosperity of the country so largely depends, is bound up with the iron-ore fields of Lorraine and the coal measures of the Ruhr, Saar, and Upper Silesian basins. Many spokesmen of the French cause, like MM. Fernand Engerand and Calvades, admit that they seek the return of Lorraine in order that Germany may be economically crippled, and they are unquestionably justified in so arguing. Bearing this fact in mind, however, it is not difficult to believe that Germany would be willing to fight as for very life for the retention of this territory, and if compelled to cede it, would never rest until it had been recovered, unless her industries still had access to the iron-ore mines which German enterprise has developed at great cost and now works at such great advantage. Those who entertain the short-sighted and illusory idea that Germany can be permanently crippled industrially, and that it will be to the interest of France and her European Allies to perform that operation upon her, will not, perhaps, be prepared to give way upon this point. Let the idea be abandoned for the chimera which it is, however, and there need be no insuperable difficulty in meeting German

claims. When territory changes political sovereignty, even owing to the fortunes of war, private property is not appropriated. All that would be necessary, therefore, would be to guarantee to the present owners of the mining fields the right to exploit their undertakings, either directly or by proxy, during a given period, the fixing of which would be a matter of negotiation.

Such a partial measure of restitution would give to France some reward for her long-deferred hopes and some recompense for her recent sacrifices, and if the result of free negotiation, and frankly accepted by both sides, it might even close for ever the feud between the two nations and so remove out of the way the greatest menace to the future peace of Europe. A settlement on these lines would be as much to the interest of Germany as of France, even if the issue of the war made it impossible for the Allies to force it upon her. It might be wise to link on such an arrangement to a comprehensive territorial readjustment in Africa which would give to Germany a larger tropical empire.

It would be in conformity with modern ideas of political justice and with the declared principles for which the Allies are fighting that any such transference of population from one country to the other should only be effected with the assent of a substantial majority of the people concerned, and the natural way of ascertaining their views is that of the *plébiscite*.

This, however, is not the standpoint from which the question is nowadays approached by French writers. Rather, their contention is that present local sentiment cannot be allowed to weigh against the fact of earlier and long-continued possession. This rejection of the *plébiscite*, a specifically French device, which Napoleon applied in the case of Nice and Savoy, and would have applied in the case of the inhabitants of North Schleswig had not Prussia deliberately broken her pledge, is quite easy to understand. Since 1871 the inhabitants of the provinces have increased from a million and a half to nearly two millions, and this increase has been coincident with a radical change in the racial

composition of the population, for while there has been a large emigration of French inhabitants, both at the time of the transfer and later, there has also been a still larger influx of German immigrants from other parts of the Empire. French estimates of the number of Alsatians who crossed the frontier after 1871 rather than submit to German rule range from a quarter to half a million, and it is assumed that almost an equal number of Germans have entered the province and made there a new home. It is probable that the number of immigrants is here understated. The census of 1910 showed that of the population of Alsace-Lorraine 238,228 were born in other parts of the Empire, and 75,855 were born abroad, a total of 314,083, but to this figure should also be added the descendants of immigrants born in the provinces. The fundamental fact to be allowed for is that two generations have been born since 1871, and that the Alsace of to-day is very different from that of forty-six years ago.

M. Yves Guyot fears that a *plébiscite* could not be conducted equitably. "What guarantee," he asks, "would a *plébiscite* afford? Who would be in charge of the ballot boxes on the polling day? Who would guarantee the genuineness of the vote or the accuracy of the figures? Would the voters be absolutely unfettered in their decision? In any case can the voters of to-day pledge the unknown future?" So far as these questions relate to matters of machinery they need not involve insuperable difficulties. The uncertainties and risks which they suggest have to be hazarded whenever the free citizens of France, or England, or Germany vote on questions of local incorporation at home, and *mutatis mutandis* they are inseparable from the ordinary political elections as determined at the polling booth. In any case there is no reason to believe that the Mixed Commission which would inevitably have to be appointed to organize and carry out such a *plébiscite* would find it impossible to devise safeguards which would ensure a free and honest expression of opinion.

While, therefore, it seems desirable to make this defence



of the *plébiscite* on general grounds, since this method of ascertaining local sentiment may play an important part in territorial readjustments in other parts of Europe, nevertheless, on the hypothesis that France would agree to a compromise which secured to her Lorraine and the districts of Alsace which are indisputably nearer to her than to Germany in race, language, and sentiment, there seems no justifiable reason for applying that method here. The problem of Alsace and Lorraine is unique, and no analogy can be drawn between it and the problem offered, for example, by the Poles of the three Empires or the Serbo-Croats of Austria.

It is not the least strong condemnation of Germany's treatment of the population of Alsace-Lorraine that while the question of its future allegiance is still being decided, steps are being taken to change the present equivocal position of the Imperial Province both under the local constitution and that of the Empire. It is true that the local constitution of 1911 gave to Alsace-Lorraine a larger measure of autonomy than it had enjoyed before, yet though it has now a legislature, endowed with the usual limited powers of German legislatures, it is still in effect governed from Berlin and by the Emperor's irresponsible nominees. There can never be the slightest hope of reconciling the Alsatians to German rule so long as this intolerable position continues. Here, indeed, the original population and the immigrants have a grievance in common, for nothing is more galling to the people of States with Liberal constitutions, like Baden and Wurtemberg, than to find on crossing the frontier that they have suddenly become imperial citizens of an inferior type. Prussia has tried in her heavy, stubborn, unenlightened way to govern Alsace-Lorraine for nearly half a century, and has completely failed to commend herself to a people whose spirit she has neither the sympathy nor the wit to understand. Even in Germany it had long been recognized that only when the system of Prussianism had been abandoned, and the provinces were allowed to govern themselves independently on truly democratic

principles, would the incubus which has hitherto lain so heavily upon this ill-treated part of the Empire be removed.

The old idea of neutralizing the provinces may be dismissed as impracticable. It would satisfy neither France nor Germany, and it is questionable whether the prospect would please the population or afford that guarantee of security and stability which it is so imperatively needful to create in any revision of the existing status. Signor Crispi, in May, 1889, suggested the idea to Bismarck, but received a discouraging answer. "The time for neutral States is past," Bismarck said. "The French Government might agree to it, but not even that would suffice to ward off war. We should no longer be able to threaten France by land, while France would be able to attack us by sea." What is needed, in the event of Alsace-Lorraine or a portion of it remaining in present hands, is that the population should be given political independence as complete as that which is enjoyed by any other German State, and that in the exercise of this right of complete autonomy it should be free to choose its own form of government. The form chosen would undoubtedly be democratic, and it might even be republican.

In what has preceded I have endeavoured to put the *pro* and *contra* of the French case for restitution in the light in which it will undoubtedly be viewed when the question has been removed from the atmosphere of polemic, recognizing that no disputant can take a fair and safe measure of the strength or weakness of his own position until he understands the position of his antagonist. If, nevertheless, tempted by whole-hearted sympathy with France, and French national aspirations in this conflict, I were to abandon a strictly objective discussion of this question, I should wish to distinguish between those claims of our gallant Ally which inhere in historical, and those which derive their strongest sanction from moral, considerations. The historical argument, as has been shown, cuts both ways, though from the standpoint of ethnology, language, and political tradition—all factors pertinent to

that argument—the claim of France to Lorraine and an important part of Alsace must be regarded as very strong. The plea sometimes made on Germany's behalf, that the provinces were a lawful prize of war, is obviously weak at every point. For even were it not the case that the war of 1870 was deliberately schemed by Germany, through her Chancellor, War Minister, and battle-thinker—the complicity of Roon and Moltke in the falsification of the Ems telegram is, singularly enough, passed over by commentators, though these men not only approved of the act but rejoiced in it—the answer to this plea is that if the fortunes of war can be held at any time to legitimize measures of spoliation, a tenure so established cannot in its very nature be permanent, for what may be gained by military success in one campaign may be lost, perhaps with greater justification, by failure in another.

What may be regarded as the moral case of France for restitution rests even more clearly upon the fact of Germany's unprovoked and criminal attack in August, 1914, and of the appalling sacrifices and suffering which France has undergone in repelling it. One's ideas of justice would be strangely confused, nay, outraged, were Germany, if beaten in this second and still fouler war of aggression against her neighbour, able to retain the whole of the territorial spoils of forty-six years ago. How far she should in that event be required to renounce them is, however, a question not merely of arms but of statesmanship.

Nevertheless, this consideration of the most critical territorial problem of the settlement must end, as it began, with the frank admission that, given her adversary's defeat, it will be for France to say the decisive word. Whether, in the event of that word implying the rejection of compromise on any terms, France will expect the armed guarantee of her present Allies in supporting it, how far such a guarantee could be given, and what would be the extent of the liabilities thereby involved—these are questions which it may well be premature to discuss, though it is not even now too soon to think about them.

## CHAPTER V

### THE POLISH PROBLEM

"*Placet*, because so many great and learned men desire it; but when I shall have long been dead it will be seen what must come out of this violation of all that has hitherto been held to be just and sacred."—*Maria Theresa, in assenting to the first partition of Poland.*

"It is no part of our purpose to attempt to justify the conduct of the partitioning Powers towards the Poles. On the contrary, we will join in the verdict of murder, robbery, treason, perjury, and baseness, which every free nation and all honest men must award to Russia, Prussia, and Austria, for their undissembled and unmitigated wickedness on that occasion. . . . But our question is, not the conduct of the conquerors, but the present, as compared with the former condition of the conquered; the first is but an abstract and barren subject for the disquisition of the moralist; the latter appeals to our sympathies, because it is pregnant with the destinies of millions of our fellow-creatures."—*Richard Cobden, "Political Writings," vol. i., p. 216.*

"Every success for the Polish national movement is a defeat for Prussia, and we cannot fight against this element by simple justice, but only according to the rules of war. The Polish question cannot be judged by us impartially, but only with hostility."—*Bismarck to Count von Bernstorff, 1861.*

"In the struggle between nationalities one nation is the hammer and the other the anvil; one is the victor and the other the vanquished. . . . No consideration for the Polish people must hinder us from doing all we can to maintain and strengthen German nationality in the former Polish territories."—*Prince Bülow, "Imperial Germany."*

THE renewed outburst of sympathy with the Poles which the war has evoked is due not merely to the tragic spectacle of members of a proud and gifted race being compelled, by the accident of their political citizenship, to fight against each other, for this irony they have shared with other branches of the Slavic family. It is due still more to the superb example which the Poles have offered throughout a century and a half of oppression, often taking cruel and barbarous forms, of unflinching fidelity to nationality, and an invincible deter-

mination to justify their claim to take again a place in the history of Europe as a united people. Even the Central Powers are agreed that the Polish question stands no longer where it did, and that, however the war may end, the Poles must be able to count upon a happier future.

As no question of the settlement possesses greater interest for the world at large, so none presents more and greater difficulties than the Polish question. Not only does it differ altogether in essence from the question of Alsace-Lorraine, but it far surpasses it in extent and complexity. Here the issue to be decided is not whether the remnant of a comparatively small expatriated population shall return to a rule from which it has not long, as the life of nations is measured, been transferred, but whether three sundered portions of an ancient nation, which were incorporated five generations ago against their will in separate dominions, in which they have never ceased to regard themselves as aliens, shall at last, after so long a period of division and repression, be reunited and regain political independence.

Full justice can be done to the Polish cause without extravagant attempts to over-idealize it and the Poles themselves. To represent the Poles, as some writers have done, as from the earliest historical times a unique and noble people, a nation of super-men, who were busily cultivating the manly virtues of freedom and independence while the rest of Europe was still under the heel of tyranny, is to write romance and not history. They were in early times a very pushing race, not less covetous of other people's vineyards than the nations which at a later date, after suffering many things at their hands, turned upon and rent them. For several centuries they had their fling and enjoyed a good time; they were the aggressors of Eastern Europe, living by conquest and lording it over all their weaker neighbours, at one time carrying the sword as far as Moscow. As for their political system, far from being democratic, it gave all rights to the large class of petty nobles—one in twenty of the population—and none at all to the

people at large, who were for the most part a race of slaves, lacking security both for limb and life. The so-called Polish republic was in truth a despotic oligarchy of the worst kind, and down to the time of its extinction the Poles who lived under foreign rule enjoyed a freer and happier existence than those who lived at home. For the modern world, however, it is safe to say that the military achievements and the political experiments of the Poles in distant days possess little interest as compared with their contributions to culture—to literature, music, and art—in times comparatively recent.

The Polish question, as it is understood to-day, dates from the first partition of the kingdom in 1772. That act was justified by the pretext that owing to internal discords and feuds the kingdom had become a nuisance and a danger to Europe. It was really an act of unmitigated aggression, well worthy of its instigator, Frederick the Great of Prussia, who had already despoiled Silesia. The Empress Catherine of Russia and the Emperor Joseph II of Austria were his accomplices, and shared with him in the spoil. Repartitions took place in 1793 and 1795. Meantime, the Poles had still retained their King and their Diet, and as late as 1791 a new constitution was promulgated by which the peasantry and rural labourers were solemnly given full liberty, subject to the power of their masters, the landowning nobles, to do with them exactly as they pleased: serfage continued in Poland, in fact, for more than a generation. With the partition of 1795, however, the old Polish kingdom ceased to exist.

The existing apportionment of the former Polish territories was determined in 1815 by the Powers of Europe assembled at the Congress of Vienna. It follows, therefore, that the treaty in which the shares of the three States concerned were then revised is just as much a part of international law as the treaties which reconstituted Belgium in 1830.

Roughly speaking, the Polish population in the three empires may be estimated at about 20,000,000. By

far the largest share falls to Russia, viz. 11,338,000, though of these only 9,000,000 are found in the "kingdom of Poland," as created in 1815, the remainder living mainly in Lithuania and to a less extent in Volhynia and Podolia. The Polish population of Austria-Hungary numbers 4,994,000, nearly all living in Austria proper, where they are mainly confined to the province of Galicia, though a large number are scattered about the crown-land of Silesia. Both these territories they share with other nationalities—Galicia with the Ruthenians, and Silesia with the Germans and Bohemians. While, however, the western half of Galicia is overwhelmingly—probably to the extent of 90 per cent.—Polish, the remaining inhabitants being Jews, Ruthenians, and Germans, Eastern Galicia contains a larger mixture of races. There the Ruthenians dominate, and the Poles form little more than one-third of the population.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the German Empire has a Polish population of 3,554,000, of whom all but 50,000 live in Prussia, and all but half a million in the four eastern provinces of the monarchy—West Prussia, Posen (the Grand-duchy), East Prussia, and Silesia. Silesia, however, can no longer be fairly counted to the Polish *irredenta*, since its political connection with the Polish Empire ceased in the Middle Ages. In addition, Germany has 472,000 other Slavs, viz. 204,000 Masurians, 109,000 Casubians, 94,000 Lithuanians, and 65,000 Wends.

Little can be said in praise of the spirit shown to its Polish inhabitants by any one of the three empires. All have treated these unwilling subjects more or less as aliens. Periods of comparative leniency have, indeed, alternated with periods of drastic repression, but liberal administration has seldom been given a long trial. On the whole Austria has treated her Poles

<sup>1</sup> No two estimates of the number of Poles in the east of Europe quite agree, but I have adopted the figures given by Mr. A. E. Gurney in his chapter on "The Population of the Polish Commonwealth" contributed to "Poland's Case for Independence" [George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.], as I understand that these figures are accepted by the advocates of the Polish cause in this country.

with greater consideration and understanding than either of the two other empires, and this holds good particularly for the last half-century. Considerations of policy have no doubt weighed with the Austrian ruler and his advisers quite as much as humane motives. During the first half of the century no great efforts were made to help the Poles to feel at home in a country which as yet was without a constitution. With the introduction of parliamentary institutions, however, Polish support became a valuable Ministerial asset, and it was bought by important concessions to national sentiment. In Galicia the free use of Polish is allowed in the schools, the administration, and the courts, and Polish officials are largely appointed in the public service. "Galicia," says a Polish writer, "is the only part of Poland where the Poles enjoy constitutional rights, and where their national development is not hampered." Never has Austria openly attempted to crush the national spirit and wipe out the culture of the Polish race.

For crude and violent repression Russia's record is the least enviable, yet Prussia has reaped the deepest hatred of the Poles by reason of the systematic policy of persecution, irritation, and chicanery which has been followed with but little intermission ever since Bismarck became Minister President in 1862. Prussian statesmanship has never grasped the elementary fact that alien races, if they are to be governed successfully, must be governed as what they are. Instead of trying to govern the Poles as Poles, Prussia has consistently endeavoured to make them into Germans. When a century ago the Powers confirmed Frederick William III of Prussia in the possession of his Polish territories, that ruler promised "on his royal word," for himself and his successors, to give to the Poles full religious liberty and to maintain the use of the Polish language in administration, the law courts, and the schools. Not a vestige of the pledge remains to-day.

The fact that Prussia has entirely failed in her policy of denationalizing an older nation than her own does not deter her from persisting in the old



wrong-headed course. It is characteristic of Prussian mentality that while the advocates of a rigorous system of Germanization admit that they make no real headway, they perversely excuse their want of success by the plea that repression has not been sufficiently severe. One consequence of the harsh treatment which the Prussian Poles have so long endured is that they hold aloof from the rest of the population far more than do their kinsmen in Austria or Russia. However isolated he may be, the Pole remains everywhere a Pole, whether he be an agricultural labourer living amongst German settlers in the east of Prussia, or a collier in Westphalia, or a little shopkeeper in any one of the commercial towns of the monarchy. So, too, the Polish working classes organize themselves in their own trade unions, and if Socialists, as they often are, prefer to be regarded as Polish rather than German or International Socialists.

The results of the elections to the Imperial Diet are a reliable index of the strength of Polish sentiment, and these afford no indication whatever of readiness to accept the existing political status. The following is a record of the numbers of Polish deputies returned to the Diet, with the votes recorded in their support, at the various general elections since 1870<sup>1</sup>:

POLISH DEPUTIES RETURNED AND POLISH VOTES RECORDED, IN ELECTIONS TO THE IMPERIAL DIET.

Year of Election.	Number of Deputies Returned.	Number of Votes Recorded.
1871	13	176,300
1874	14	198,400
1877	14	216,100
1878	14	210,100
1881	18	194,900
1884	16	203,200
1887	13	220,000
1890	16	246,800
1892	19	229,500
1898	14	244,100
1903	16	347,800
1907	20	453,900
1912	18	441,700

<sup>1</sup> An equal value cannot be attached to the results of the elections to the Prussian Lower House. Election to that body is indirect, the franchise is

It will be seen that the figures relating to the voting strength of the party show in general a progressive increase, which is quite disproportionate to the increase of population; though, chiefly owing to the fact that the Poles have throughout been in the main concentrated in the same districts, and to the absence of any change in the distribution of seats, there has been no permanent increase in the strength of the party in Parliament. Allowing for the effect upon the elections of special political issues, panic Army Bills and the like, the return of voters shows that in the crises in the history of the national cause the Polish party has never shown traces of division. Thus it will be seen that on the occasion of Prince Bülow's famous appeal to the nation in the elections of January, 1907, to make common cause against the Roman Catholic or Centre party, the Poles who, though separately organized, work in close association with their co-religionists, replied with a larger vote and a stronger parliamentary group than ever before.

Many able Germans are at present discussing the future of the Poles of Prussia, and most of them agree that there must be a break with the old policy of repression, and even profess to believe that nowhere else in Europe will this down-trodden race henceforth find a warmer welcome and kinder treatment than at the hearthstone of the German family. Such protestations of a new-born sympathy for the Poles are well understood by the Polish population for what they are—political window-

narrow and artificial, and there has been no redistribution of seats since Prussia received a constitution in 1850, with the result that the working and poorer classes are almost altogether deprived of political influence. If, nevertheless, the return of Polish deputies at the various elections since 1870, from which time a separate Polish party has existed, shows a slight falling off (from 19 to 15) in parliamentary strength, the fact is sufficiently explained by the strenuous efforts made by the Government and the administrative authorities to curb Polish agitation and counteract Polish influence, to the large migration of Poles to the western provinces of the monarchy, and the far larger Polish emigration to the United States. The elections to the Imperial Diet are more instructive, owing to the democratic basis upon which they are held—a manhood suffrage which is at once equal, direct, and secret—and to the greater freedom with which the electors are able to exercise their right to vote.

dressing of a very tawdry and deceptive kind. They remind one of more than one episode of a similar kind in Prussian history. When at the beginning of the war of 1866 the Prussian armies entered Bohemia, their generals issued a proclamation to the population declaring that they came "not as enemies and conquerors, but with complete respect for your historical and national rights," and promising that in the event of the success of Prussian arms the Bohemians and Moravians, like the Hungarians, might "hope to see their national wishes realized." Prussia beat Austria in that war, and as a result dictated her own terms of peace, but no more was said about the "historical and national rights" of the Bohemians. So it would be with Prussia's promises to the Poles if Germany came out of the war victorious.

Some of the advocates of a new departure, like Delbrück and Naumann, are perfectly sincere, but such men have always been amongst the opponents of a policy of repression, and have failed to secure the acceptance of their views. The hard fact has to be faced that respect for the characteristics and aspirations of alien races has never been a tradition of Prussian statecraft, and that for the Prussian Government and the feudal Conservatives who dictate its policy to change their attitude towards the Poles would be to change themselves. There might be a momentary disposition to soften the pressure of coercion in some directions, at least for a time, but there is no justification for the assumption that such a reversal of policy would be permanent. There is nothing inherently improbable, of course, in sudden political, any more than in sudden religious, conversions; the important point is whether the convert will have the strength of will and purpose to continue faithfully in the new way. I gravely doubt the sincerity of Prussia's concern for the better government of her Polish subjects, and I shall be prepared to credit it only when the Poles themselves do so. Only when the Prussian system of government is itself transformed, and the nation takes full charge of its own affairs, will there be a genuine promise of a better spirit.

If race unity and consciousness, the strength of national traditions and aspirations, and a passionate desire to regain their old place in history could alone decide the claim of the Poles to form a new and independent State, there would be no more to say. But political questions can seldom be decided on abstract principles. History often plays cruel tricks with the noblest and worthiest of causes, and it is one of the greatest ironies of history that the more tenaciously the Poles have clung to their nationality, and the more bravely they have struggled to emancipate themselves from unsympathetic alien domination, the more the goal of political unity and independence has seemed to recede from their view. When the severest judgment which it deserves has been passed upon the partition of Poland, the fact remains that the initial crime was committed in 1772, and not in 1914, and that the conditions of the problem of Polish regeneration are to-day altogether different from what they were when Poland ceased to be a political unit, or even in 1815, when her fate was last decided by the Powers of Europe. If the past should not be forgotten, so also should not the present, and what the statesmen of the peace settlement will have to do is to balance the pros and cons of the case with judicial impartiality and a constant sense of what is practicable if the solution of the Polish problem is to be one which will not create new and greater difficulties for a later generation to grapple with and perhaps war over.

Every friend of political progress, even the most convinced pacifist, recognizes the desirability of satisfying the "just claims of nationality" in the case of the Poles as of other races which are looking for liberation as the result of the present war. The difficulty is first to define what are these "just claims," and then to discover a way of meeting them which will not be at variance with the equitable claims of others. It is also clear that the Poles themselves are far from being united upon the question. One large group would be satisfied with autonomy under Russia, but the more vigorous, if not the stronger, group demands completé political in-

dependence ; in other words, the abandonment by all the three Eastern Empires of their Polish territories and the formation of these into a sovereign State. Whether such an arrangement would tend to the tranquillity of Eastern Europe is a question open to grave doubt, but in any case it is wise to consider the attendant difficulties.

Perhaps the principal one is the fact that the twenty million Poles of Eastern Europe could only be brought together in an autonomous State by incorporating with them a population of almost equal extent which is not Polish at all. Rather than risk the dangers inseparable from such a course, the advocates of a Polish State would no doubt be willing to see this alien element reduced to the smallest practicable proportions, but small it could never be, and in proportion as non-Poles were excluded so also would Poles, since it is the very diffusion of races which creates the obstacle in the way of a perfectly satisfactory solution of the question. Even if the new State were to be limited to the Prussian Polish provinces, Western Galicia, the Polish part of Silesia, and the Russian kingdom of Poland, it would mean that for seventeen and a half million Poles there would still be nine and a half millions of non-Poles.

It is useless to ignore objections of this kind ; they are not manufactured by enemies of the Polish cause—far from it—but are inherent in the very facts of the problem, and unless they are candidly faced betimes they may not merely prejudice but thwart the cause of Polish nationalism at the very moment when its prospects appear to be brightest.

A moderate and well-informed Russian writer states :

It appears that the Poles do not pretend any longer to impose their nationality on non-Polish populations. . . . It is known from private utterances of their foremost leaders that they would be satisfied if all districts with over 50 per cent. of Polish nationality were included in the autonomous Poland.\*

It is obvious that any limit of inclusion must at best be arbitrary, but whatever it might be,

\* "Russia and Democracy," by G. de Wesselitsky, p. 77.

the case of populations on the numerical border-line would entail special hardships. Moreover, assuming that over 50 per cent. of the population of a given territorial unit is to-day Polish, and hence on the principle suggested above proper to be added to the Polish State, what effect would future changes have upon its political status? That this is not a hypothetical question may be shown by the enumeration of the German and Polish populations of the extensive government district of Bromberg, in the Prussian province of Posen, in 1900, 1905, and 1910 respectively, which were as follows, as determined by the language test :

	1900.	1905.	1910.
Total population	689,023	725,243	763,947
German... ..	332,921 = 48·3 %	354,714 = 48·9 %	379,488 = 49·7 %
German + German and another language*	337,691 = 49·0 %	358,067 = 49·4 %	384,444 = 50·3 %
Polish †... ..	351,119 = 50·9 %	365,337 = 50·4 %	378,831 = 49·6 %

\* The inhabitants speaking "German and another language" numbered in 1900, 4,770; 1905, 3,353; and 1910, 4,956.

† Including Masurians and Casubians, viz. 146 in 1900, but in 1905 and 1910 not stated.

According to these figures a transference which might have been deemed just in 1900 would have been less just in 1905, and in 1910 should have been reversed as inequitable. It is clear that in determining the question of future citizenship it would be necessary to take into account the racial movement of population during a series of years and its probable effect in the near future.

It is in Prussia that the difficulty of determining what may properly be regarded as Polish districts presents itself in the acutest form. In the Russian kingdom of Poland and in Western Galicia the population is far more homogeneous, the Poles forming in the former territory 80 per cent. of all inhabitants, while 5 per

cent. more belong to other Slavic races, and in the latter 90 per cent. with  $2\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. of other Slavs. In the so-called Polish provinces of Prussia, however, the races are hopelessly intermingled. Of a population of 40,165,000 shown by the Prussian census of 1910, the mother language of 35,426,000 was German, of 3,501,000 Polish, of 997,000 another language, and of 241,000 German and another language. Of the three and a half million Poles, 2,991,000, or 85.4 per cent., fell to the three provinces of Posen, West Prussia, and Silesia, while 81,000 lived in the province of East Prussia, which lies between the province of West Prussia and the Russian frontier. The majority of the remainder was found in the industrial districts of Westphalia (183,500) and the Rhineland (71,700). In Westphalia they formed 4.4 per cent. of the entire population though there were small areas with a far larger percentage.

The extent and ratio of the Polish population, as determined by the principle of language, in the four eastern provinces as a whole, and in the government districts into which the provinces are divided, will be seen from the following table :

Provinces and Government Districts.	Total Population.	German.	Polish.	Percentage of Polish Population.
POSEN ... ..	2,099,831	806,720	1,278,870	60.9
Posen ... ..	1,335,884	427,232	900,059	67.4
Bromberg ... ..	763,947	379,488	378,831	49.6
WEST PRUSSIA ... ..	1,703,474	1,097,943	475,853	27.9
Danzig ... ..	742,619	532,620	102,080	13.9
Marienwerder ... ..	960,855	565,323	373,773	38.9
EAST PRUSSIA ... ..	2,064,175	1,680,003	81,147	3.9
Königsberg ... ..	914,119	874,410	2,820	0.3
Gumbinnen ... ..	606,587	531,273	5,173	0.9
Allenstein ... ..	543,469	274,320	73,154	13.5
SILESIA ... ..	5,225,962	3,774,345	1,236,228	23.7
Breslau ... ..	1,841,398	1,762,460	51,991	2.8
Liegnitz ... ..	1,176,583	1,127,840	14,897	1.3
Oppeln ... ..	2,207,981	884,045	1,169,340	52.9

A study of these figures, as they stand, without carrying the localization of Polish influence into greater detail, will at once suggest one of the most serious practical difficulties in the way of any general transference of Prussian territory to a new Polish State. The fact is that Polish territory and Polish population are not convertible terms; they never were, and to-day they are less so than ever before. It will be observed that even in the most Polish government district of the most Polish of the Prussian provinces there is still a minority of 23 per cent. of non-Poles, for the most part pure Germans; while the non-Polish minority for the province as a whole is 39 per cent., or roughly two non-Polish inhabitants for every three Poles. This strong element of Germanism is by no means of recent date. It has been estimated that even at the time of the last partition of Poland there were between 300,000 and 400,000 Germans in the province of Posen as against some 600,000 Poles.

On the other hand, in West Prussia 72 per cent. and in Silesia 76 per cent. of the inhabitants are non-Poles, though in one government district of the latter province the Poles are in a majority. Only a small part of East Prussia belonged to the old Polish kingdom, and even in the government district in which Polish influence is to-day strongest a majority of 86 per cent. are non-Poles. It is true that in the provinces of Posen, West Prussia, and Silesia there are many smaller districts in which the inhabitants are overwhelmingly and in some cases almost exclusively Polish, but precisely the same thing holds good of German influence. The broad fact remains that German and Pole are so inextricably mixed, dispute for numerical predominance at so many points, and maintain at so many others a condition of comparative equipoise, that of only a few large areas is it possible to say that they are either essentially Polish or essentially German.

The position of Silesia merits special consideration, since, though containing two-fifths of the total Polish population of the four eastern provinces, it was for



centuries, long before it passed from Austrian into Prussian hands, regarded as outside the Polish pale. As early as the twelfth century Silesia was lost to the Polish kingdom, and from that time forward it fast succumbed to German influence. The present large Polish population in Upper Silesia, as shown by the figures given above for the government district of Oppeln, is largely due to the influx of labourers, attracted by the iron and coal mining industries, whose development has been continuous for half a century. In the rest of the province the Poles form numerically an insignificant element. The city of Breslau, for example, though once a Polish city, is now as German in national spirit as Berlin or Hamburg. Polish agitation has for many years been very active in Upper Silesia, and the attempts to stimulate the national movement there have been attended by a considerable degree of success, yet it is significant that while in the government district of Oppeln, the centre of Polonism in the province, the Poles form a clear majority of the population, only three of the twenty-two deputies returned to the Prussian Diet by this district in the last election were members of the Polish national party, and the rest of the province returned no Pole. The contrast presented by the province of Posen, where the Polish movement enlists genuine and passionate enthusiasm, and forms a common basis for unity of political action, is very striking. In the government district of Posen nine Polish nationalists were returned in the same election out of the nineteen deputies assigned to the district.

To claim that because in the Middle Ages Silesia was settled by Poles, though it ceased to belong to the Polish kingdom, it may in the twentieth century be reclaimed as Polish territory is to push the principle of nationality to altogether unjustifiable extremes. The fact is that Poland as a racial and geographical expression differed at different times. A restless, adventurous, aggressive people, the Poles took territory when they had the power and kept it if they could, with the result that the old kingdom varied in extent as between one

time and another. Already in early mediæval times the pagan Prussians were busily pushing their way into the Baltic regions then in Polish occupation, and it was there that the nucleus of the later Prussian monarchy was formed. In the twelfth century the Teutonic orders of knighthood were given a foothold in the same region, in the hope that they would keep in check the Prussian pressure. Soon flourishing Teutonic settlements were established, for where the orders came they remained, and each colony became a centre for further influence and a base for further advance.

It is instructive to know how Germans themselves view this aspect of the Polish problem, and the following remarks of Professor Hans Delbrück, published in his review the *Preussische Jahrbücher* for December, 1916, will serve as an illustration :

About four million Poles live in Prussia, distributed in four provinces<sup>1</sup> and mixed with eight millions of Germans. It is impossible entirely to extrude these Poles from German territory, or even to segregate geographically any considerable part of this family. When Western statesmen demand that the Polish territories of Prussia should be thrown to the new Polish kingdom we can cordially answer, Yes, willingly, for there are no purely Polish districts in Prussia. Even the most Polish circles (subdivisions of "government districts") of all have still 10 per cent. of Germans, and in not a few circles there are 25 per cent. The districts with a Polish majority stretch so far into German territory that they cannot be geographically segregated. It follows that the border-line between Prussian and Pole, as historically created, can no longer be transformed. If we deduct the one and a quarter million of Poles in Upper Silesia, who for five centuries have no longer felt themselves to be Poles, the half a million Protestant Masurians in East Prussia, and some hundreds of thousands of Poles in the interior of Germany as far as Westphalia, there remain about one and three-quarter million Poles in Posen and West Prussia.

Admitting that the case against restitution as here stated is *ex parte* and unduly favourable to Prussia, the

<sup>1</sup> Delbrück here counts with the Poles the other Slavic races, the Masurians, Casubians, etc.

main argument is unquestionably correct: the Poles of Eastern Prussia could not be joined politically with their Russian and Austrian brethren without taking with them a still larger number of Germans. And once more the answer to such an arrangement is that two wrongs never yet made a right. If it has proved impossible to Germanize the Poles of the eastern provinces in a hundred and fifty years, it would prove impossible in a thousand to Polonize the Germans of the same districts, if absorbed in a Polish kingdom. The history of the unhappy relationships between the two nations proves the impracticability of their assimilation. The Germans have hitherto insisted that the Poles shall go under, and the Poles will not. Reverse the existing ascendancy, and the same inevitable struggle would lead to the same result.

There is, however, a further practical difficulty in the way of the cession of the Polish districts of Prussia, and it is the situation of the adjacent province of East Prussia. A glance at the map will show how the old Polish province of West Prussia stretches from the Baltic deep into the heart of a purely German territory, and cuts off East Prussia, the cradle of the Prussian monarchy, from the provinces of Pomerania and Brandenburg, lying to the west. An arrangement that would divide the monarchy into two portions, the eastern portion only accessible, except through foreign territory, by sea, would be for Prussia intolerable, and assuredly would not be in the interest of future peace. Further, the annexation of West Prussia would carry with it the loss to Prussia of the port of Danzig, than which no town of Prussia is to-day more German in sentiment, enterprise, wealth, and it may be added in patriotic pride, since Danzig, which was one of the mediæval Hansa towns, regards itself as in a peculiar sense the warden of Germanism in the far east of the Empire.

At the same time the admission may be frankly made for what it is worth, that if it were possible and expedient to decide this question by force, with no regard for any other considerations, the annexation of the Polish districts of Prussia to a Polish State under Russian

suzerainty would not, in all probability, be attended by the same immediate danger of a war of restitution as in the case of the forcible retrocession of Alsace-Lorraine. The reason is not simply that Russia will in course of time become a far more formidable military Power than France can ever hope to be. Still more important is the fact that the Polish question is not, like the question of Alsace-Lorraine, an all-German and imperial question, but exclusively a Prussian question. It is very unlikely that the other States, and the States of the South in particular, which have never concealed their disgust at Prussia's methods of governing her Prussian provinces, would be willing to risk another European war in order to put back under the domination of Prussia a people which she has shown herself unwilling to conciliate and incompetent to rule. It is only necessary to bear in mind the deep-seated resentment which is borne by the Southern States against the northern kingdom on account of its responsibility for the discontent of the Imperial Province of Alsace-Lorraine, in order to understand what would be their reply to the suggestion that the reconquest of Prussian Poland should be made a *casus fœderis* for the whole Empire. Whether it could be so interpreted is a constitutional question, the answer to which would depend upon various circumstances into which it is superfluous to enter here.

The difficulties inherent in the Polish problem have been increased by the variety of the rival schemes which have been proposed by the Allied and enemy Powers. First came the promise made, in the name of Russia, by the Grand-duke Michael at the beginning of the war, and later endorsed by the Czar, of the reunion of all the Poles of the three empires in an autonomous kingdom under the Russian Crown. The pledge itself was definite, but its meaning was not, and even in Russia the utmost diversity of interpretation has ever since been placed upon the Grand Duke's words. What sort of autonomy was the new Polish State to enjoy? Would it form a political unit in the Russian Empire as independent as is, say, Hungary in the Dual

Monarchy, or even as were the Elbe duchies so long as they continued in personal union with Denmark? Would it have only such an autonomy in internal affairs as the provinces of Croatia and Slavonia under Hungary? Autonomy is not a Russian idea or a passion of Russian Sovereigns, and it is not surprising that to questions like these satisfactory answers have not been forthcoming. The ex-Czar dallied with this question until the summer of 1916 without making up his mind; and meantime the German-Austrian advance into Poland had set in, taking the matter out of his hands.

The new Government, created in the seat of the Czar-dom in March, 1917, has shown itself no less sympathetic in principle to Polish aspirations in Russia. It likewise speaks of "the creation of an independent Polish State formed of all the territories of which the majority of the population is Polish," the inclusion of the Polish districts of the two adjacent empires being here implied. This State is to be "bound to Russia by a free military union," and so to form "a solid rampart against the pressure of the Central Powers against the Slavic nations." Its form of government is to be chosen by its inhabitants.

On the other hand, the Central Powers propose to convert Russian Poland—the so-called Congress kingdom—into a vassal State, nominally subject to Germany and Austria-Hungary as a sort of *condominium*, which means, in fact, subject to the former, while the Prussian and Austrian portions of the old Polish commonwealth are to continue in their present hands. And this so-called liberation of the Russian Poles is not to be effected for the purpose of their better government, but simply in order that Russia may lose a million soldiers and the Central Powers or Germany gain them. A revelation of German speculations on this point is afforded by an article contributed to the review *März* (November 18, 1916) by Herr G. Gothein, a well-known deputy of the Imperial Diet, who writes:

Poland must place its military strength in the service of Central Europe, of which it is a part. Poland should rightly

have its own army; but assurance must be given by military conventions—perhaps in the form of those which existed between Bavaria and the North German Confederation from 1866 to 1871—that in the event of war it will be on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Perhaps only in Prussia could this cynical idea of exploiting the cause of Polish nationality in the interest of militarism, and of consolidating the Poles of the three empires in order that they may be used at some future time in warfare against other branches of the Slavic family, have originated. It is not surprising to be assured by German authorities that even the Poles of Prussia have received the proposal of the Central Powers with sullen disapproval. For the present the new Polish State exists only in name, and the State Council appointed for its government has proved a fiasco.

If it be objected that what has been said is little more than a statement of difficulties, and promises no practical results, the answer is that positive results can only be hoped for to the extent that every element in the problem is fairly faced. Even amongst the Liberal friends of the Polish cause in Russia there are those who hold that the problem is one which cannot be solved by the Allies alone, but must form the subject of international negotiation on a wider scale. The more impartially it is studied, in fact, the plainer it is seen that the question is one of which a complete and final settlement can be expected from neither a treaty of peace between the present combatants nor a first international Peace Congress.

Nevertheless, it is evident that the Polish question cannot be allowed to stand where it is. By their unequivocal endorsement of Polish national claims the Allied and Neutral Powers have incurred towards the Poles a moral responsibility which cannot be renounced with honour or safety. Russia, France, Great Britain, the minor States of Europe, and over the ocean the United States, have rung with the cries of "Polish regeneration!" and "Poland for the Poles!"—cries all the more popular since few people have troubled to ask what, precisely,

they mean. To shatter entirely the hopes which have thus been created would be an act of betrayal.

Perhaps rather than see the question left as it is, the Poles would be satisfied with what they can get, and an alternative which should be practicable is that such of the old Polish territories now forming part of Russia as might be agreed (with the kingdom of Poland as a minimum) should be formed into a truly autonomous State, either as part of the Russian Empire or, if Russia is willing, politically independent, neutralized, and placed under the protection of the Congress Powers. By the creation of this second "Congress Poland" satisfaction would be given to the political aspirations of more than one-half of the European Poles, and the name "Poland" would reappear upon the map of Europe. It would be an advantage of such an arrangement that the alien population that would be incorporated would be small and even so overwhelmingly of the Slavic race.

There would still remain outside the Poles of Austria and of Eastern Prussia, and to that extent reunion would be incomplete. That the Austrian Poles would be willing to be transferred to a kingdom under the suzerainty of Russia may well be doubted. They might be ready to throw in their lot with an independent Polish State, provided there were some substantial guarantee of its permanence. Here, however, not merely the attitude of the present Russian Government but the future constitutional organization of Russia has to be considered, and no one will dare to prophesy with confidence what that will be. There seems, therefore, little likelihood that a *plébiscite* of the Poles of Austria would at the present time indicate any desire to change the existing status. Nevertheless, assuming their continuance in the Austrian monarchy, much might be done to make their position more tolerable by some scheme of Slavic federation, if only the Poles would accept that solution of the question.

The prospect of the Poles of Eastern Prussia being absorbed in a Russian or even an independent

Polish State gains no support from the facts which have already been stated. Even if it were within the power of the Allies to take from Prussia her Polish territories against her will, the fact that such a measure would entail, as has been shown, the expatriation of far more Germans than Poles, and that these Germans would form in the new kingdom an element more implacable than the Poles have ever been in Prussia, would still point to the wisdom of leaving this remnant of the Polish race—some three and a half millions—where it is. It would not be worth while to incorporate even such of the German frontier districts as contain a pronounced preponderance of Poles, for the consequent grievance to Prussia, if restricted to a smaller area, would be no less intense or intensely resented.

The continued existence of this *Polonia irredenta* might conceivably make more difficult Prussia's task of governing the alien race, but that is a risk which she would have to face. If Russia and Austria succeeded in making their Polish families happy, it is possible that Prussia, under a more popular system of government than exists at present, might break away altogether from her old vicious traditions and introduce likewise into the government of her Polish subjects, both political and local, methods which would abate the existing antagonism and pave the way for ultimate reconciliation.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE RACE PROBLEM IN AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

"This tough old Austrian Empire, which was by many considered so near its annihilation, stands firmer and stronger than it has shown itself since the days of Maria Theresa; it is an old wall of granite, against which a great many heads will yet break ere they succeed in throwing it over."—*Count Karolyi, in a letter to Henry Greville, quoted under date December 24, 1848, in "Leaves from the Diary of Henry Greville."*

"It is greatly for the interests of Europe that Austria should continue to be a Great Power in the centre of the Continent."—*Lord Palmerston, January 1, 1859.*

"I believe that in the strength and independence of Austria lie the best hopes of European stability and peace."—*Lord Salisbury, October, 1879.*

"She (Austria) has difficulty enough with the Slavs she has who differ in race only. To make Slavs of another religion will be a yet more hazardous experiment, unless she could become a real Slav Power, and I do not think this is possible" (September 1, 1883). "The Russian people have strong sympathies with the Balkan populations. There is no Austrian people of which this can be said, though a fraction has sympathies, and another fraction, the Magyars, antipathies. Russia as a State again can work among these populations with far greater force, having a hold upon them by the past and future such as Austria has not" (October 7, 1883).—*Letters of Mr. Gladstone to Lord Granville.*

"It counts in our (German) favour that Austria and Russia have opposing interests in the Balkans, while none such, in strength enough to occasion an open breach and actual struggle, exist between Russia and Prussia and Germany. This advantage, however, may be taken from us . . . by personal misunderstanding and maladroitness policy."—*Prince Bismarck, "Reflections and Reminiscences."*

THE general ferment and the wide-spread loosening of old political ties caused by the war have encouraged the divided and subject races of the East of Europe, and pre-eminently those belonging to the great Slavic family, to indulge new hopes of independence, and in some cases to give to these hopes ambitious and even aggressive expression. The tragedy of the position of these

ances lies in the fact of their separation from the main stock of their kinsmen, and the war has emphasized the misfortune of their division and isolation as never before. For in consequence of their subjection to alien rule they have been compelled to fight against their own flesh and blood and the friends who are striving for their emancipation—the Poles of Austria and Prussia against the Poles of Russia, the Serbo-Croats of both monarchies against the Serbs of Serbia, the Little Russians of Austria against the Little Russians of the parent nation. On the other hand, it may be that to the fact of the Habsburg Empire containing so many small nationalities may be attributed the preservation of these nationalities from destruction. Had Austria shared them with the adjacent, more homogeneous, and more masterful empires, their languages and individualities might not have been able to withstand hostile pressure with equal success.

In dealing with this problem it will be the task of the Powers united in the Peace Congress to weigh all claims sympathetically, yet at the same time with scrupulous regard for the actual facts of the political situation and the interests of Europe as a whole. They will find it essential not only to distinguish between the changes which might be desirable and those which are practicable, but again, as to the latter, between those which are prudent and those which could only be realized at the risk of provoking later grievances and perhaps dangerous international complications.

The idea from which the more radical reorganizers of Eastern Europe proceed is that of creating as many political units as possible. Such a course would be almost sure to end disastrously, and the history of the Balkans may be cited against it. The effect of the existence of so many small and weak States there has hitherto been that these States have had to fall back upon the support of larger and stronger Powers, which have in consequence become identified with the ambitions, rivalries, and feuds of their *protégés*. As an indirect result of that policy Europe is suffering unex-

amplified horrors to-day. New States fated to suffer permanently from the restrictions of their natural and material resources would be impoverished, beggar States, and their financial needs would in the end inevitably weaken their independence and bring about a recurrence of past evils.

It should be possible to do justice to the general principle of nationality without the needless multiplication of independent political units. The principle of nationality, as a working principle, is as sound as it is attractive, but only so long as it is applied with discrimination. Clearly the aim which should be kept in view is the creation of States or groups sufficiently large in area and population, sufficiently strong in economic resources, and, if may be, sufficiently gifted with political capacity to be able, after a time of probation, to stand alone and "make good" in the race of civilization.

These considerations have a vital bearing upon the question of the future composition of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, since no satisfactory settlement of the problems of Balkan politics will be possible without important territorial readjustments there. Most English and French writers who have discussed this problem, including some whose opinions carry exceptional weight, assume as a matter of course that, in the interest of its present racial components, which are to be set free, the Habsburg Empire will cease to exist. Before any such revolutionary change takes place it will first have to be proved both advantageous and unavoidable. To destroy a State for the mere sake of destruction is no more statesmanship than is the work of the housebreaker. Austria-Hungary may be a "ramshackle empire," but its polyethnic and polylingual composition would not alone justify its extinction. The British Empire itself is the most complex ethnic creation known in the world's history, yet no one has ever made that fact an argument for its dismemberment. On the contrary, the infinite variety of its composition is held to be its greatest marvel and praise.

Can the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire be

justified by misgovernment? There has unquestionably been much misgovernment of the minor races in the past, and the fate of some of these races has been made all the unhappier owing to the tyranny practised by the two dominant nations. Even here, however, there are exceptions. The Austrian Poles, for example, have on the whole been happier and better governed than their kinsmen in either Russia or Prussia, and even now that the Polish question has been reopened they would resolutely resist any change that would merely transfer them from one ruler to another. However true for the past may have been the words used by Mr. Gladstone in the Midlothian election campaign of 1880, and soon afterwards recanted on his being called to office—that there was no place on the map of Europe upon which one could lay a finger and say, “Here Austrian rule has been a blessing to humanity,” nevertheless for many years that rule has been free from the grosser forms of oppression, and no European Sovereign enjoyed the attachment of every section of his subjects in a greater degree than the late Emperor Francis Joseph.

Austria's misrule in Italy was in its day atrocious, but that day was not our day, and moreover, having paid the penalty by the forfeit of her dominions in the peninsula, the crime may fairly be regarded as expiated. Where thus history itself pronounces judgment upon nations its verdict is sufficient and final, and it closes the chapter. No one would dream of bringing up against peaceable Spain to-day the cruelties of Torquemada or the Duke of Alva's persecutions in the Low Countries, against France the pillage and rapine committed by her aggressive kings in the seventeenth century, or against the democratic Russian Government which dates from March, 1917, the sins of the old autocracy. An indictment which relates to the past rather than the present is not only unfair but false.

Nevertheless, there is somewhat to be said against Austria-Hungary even in the present day. Her chief wrong has been that she has failed to hold the balance fairly between her various subject races and has exalted

the evil spirit of ascendancy into a principle of government. The price of the union between the two monarchies which was consummated in 1867 was that the preponderant race in each State was given *carte blanche* to tyrannize over the neighbour nationalities. Although forming only 35 per cent. of the population of Austria, the Germans have succeeded in dominating all the other races because of their number and diversity. In the other monarchy the Magyars, forming nearly one-half of the population, have similarly asserted ascendancy in a still more callous spirit, in virtue of their greater strength. Not daring to offend these two strong master-races, and fearful lest the encouragement of the national elements should make for division and weakness, the Habsburgs have evolved a State whose only bonds of union have been dynastic and military. Half a century ago Cobden aptly described Austria as "only a Government and an army, and not a nation," and the description still applies.

None the less, it would be idle to pretend that an empire which has shown such vitality, and whose rule was becoming better rather than worse, has suddenly forfeited the right to live. When an organ of the body ceases to function properly the doctor will think many times before he hands over his patient to the surgeon. Nature can stand much rough usage, and has wonderful powers of recuperation, and in dealing with any living organism, such as a State is, the scientific method is to try every kind of cure before finally abandoning the hope of saving life. Imminent destruction has been predicted for the Austrian as for the Turkish Empire for generations. When at the beginning of last century Stratford Canning was predicting the speedy doom of the Sultan's rule in Europe, other political prophets were declaring no less confidently that the Habsburg realm was too unnatural, and made up of too many ill-mated parts, to last. Both empires have since suffered severely from excision, and it is not too much to say that both have survived because rather than in spite of it. By all the rules of probability the

Habsburg "ramshackle empire" should have succumbed long ago; it is a mosaic of big and little pieces, apparently held together by a cement of a kind in which modern statecraft no longer has great faith; that it should have defied time and unfavourable conditions so long and so successfully at least justifies the presumption that it has hitherto filled an essential place in the European State system.

It is not clear that any result of permanent value to the rest of Europe would be gained by the disappearance of the Habsburg Empire from the map. Even if it were reduced, as has been proposed, to its constituent elements and all its minor races were, as far as was practicable, to be organized as independent units, federated, or incorporated in other existing States, there would still remain the two powerful races which now dominate the Empire and are the foundations of its strength, the Germans and the Magyars, representing together a population of twenty-two millions. If to this number were added the scattered remnants of nationalities which, owing to geographical or other reasons, could not be segregated and attached to their natural groups, the total would be increased by many millions. Nothing that the Allies could do would prevent the two monarchies from again coalescing, as they would have every interest in doing, and even any attempt to frustrate a further intimate alliance with the German Empire would have no chance of success. As independent, international States, they would be perfectly free to contract alliances when and where they would, and the best way of driving them into even closer association with Germany than that of the past would be to weaken them unduly and to increase their consciousness of dependence and need of outside support.

Alliances are the tradition of Habsburg statecraft. Just as in past centuries Austria was augmented by marriages—"*bella gerant alii, tu, felix Austria, nube*"—so her cohesion and strength were safeguarded by political alliances. There was a break in the continuity of this feature of Austrian foreign policy in the first

half of last century, but almost immediately after the disastrous war of 1866, in which Austria reaped the penalty of her first complete isolation, she reverted to the well-tried tradition, and it was to her late conqueror that she first turned. The *rapport* or *entente* of the three Emperors—popularly, though erroneously, spoken of as an alliance—formed in 1872 lasted until 1879, when Austria-Hungary and Germany entered into a defensive union. From that time forward these two Powers have stood in a relationship of ever-increasing intimacy; and unless the entire aspect of the politics of Eastern Europe be changed, as it may and should be, an alliance of some sort will for both States be a matter of vital importance in the future.

Certain French writers, taking for granted the imminent dissolution both of the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires, have made the ingenious suggestion that the German portions of Austria with their ten million inhabitants should join the South German States (Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, and Hesse), with their eleven and three-quarter millions, in the formation of a South German Confederation, to counterbalance a new federation of the North. Such a suggestion, however, is flatly opposed to historical tendencies. There were times in the middle of last century when Bavaria seemed willing to fall in with an arrangement of the kind. In theory it was always an alternative to the proposal of national union under Prussian leadership which more and more held the field after 1848. Even when the States north of the Main had coalesced in the North German Confederation in 1867 there were still in the South many sympathizers with Austria who wished to see the remaining States joined in a corresponding union—as, indeed, the Treaty of Prague assumed that they would be—which would then have had to choose between alliance with the Prussian group or with Austria. To suppose, however, that the conditions which seemed to favour that idea half a century ago can be restored is to cherish an illusion. “There are moments in history which never return,” said Bis-

marck on one occasion, and the opportunity for the division of Germany into North and South having been allowed to slip by, it is extremely unlikely that it will ever recur.

Nor, even were it practicable, can it be assumed that union with Austria would any longer prove attractive to South Germany, for it would for the latter be a partnership in a politically bankrupt concern, a concern which might, indeed, be reorganized and put on its feet again, but which meantime is in very low repute. Bavaria, in particular, which has always regarded herself as in some sort the apple of Germany's eye, and the part of her most worth preserving, would be unlikely to welcome such an arrangement.

It may be taken for granted that North Germany, and Prussia in particular, will strain every effort to retain the Austro-Hungarian Empire intact, and above all things to keep Austria together. For such an attitude there are cogent reasons. The theory that successive German statesmen, from Bismarck forward, wished to preserve the integrity of the Habsburg realm only in order that, in the fulness of time, the more virile Northern Empire might be able to absorb it, might be supported by appeal to many exponents of the "*Drang nach Osten*" idea, from the time of List, the first notable German to advocate German "colonization" in the Slavic countries in South-eastern Europe, down to our own day. The real reason for this solicitude for Austria-Hungary, however, is the fact that its dissolution would involve the difficult question of the disposal of its Slavic and above all its German population. Austria contains about nine and a half million Germans, yet no country in Europe is less willing to welcome this offshoot of the Germanic stock than Germany herself. The explanation of this apparent paradox is religious rather than political; it lies in the fact that these nine and a half million Germans belong almost wholly to the Roman Catholic faith. With a third of her existing population already Roman Catholic, and taking its orders from the Ultramontane leaders and Rome, Germany finds her



confessional difficulties already sufficiently acute without increasing them. The addition to her twenty-two millions of Roman Catholics of the Germans of Austria would hopelessly disturb the existing balance. Moreover, as the new element would inevitably gravitate towards Bavaria and her neighbours, it would accentuate the antipathy between North and South and possibly undermine Prussia's position as the predominant partner in the Empire.

Hence the several Prussian manifestoes which have been published disclaiming, among other things, any designs upon German Austria need not unduly impress us; for whatever credit may be due to their authors' spirit of moderation, it must be understood that theirs is a moderation not of magnanimity but merely of common sense. Not love of Austria or regard for the Austrian reigning family prompts these virtuous Prussian protestations of unselfishness, but regard for Prussia's own welfare and the future tranquillity of the Prussian household. Austria must not be partitioned, for then the Austro-Germans would necessarily have to return to the fatherland, and the Prussian part of the fatherland does not want them. An anti-German Machiavelli in the Peace Congress, if such a one were conceivable in these days, would work for the union of the Germans of the two empires at all costs, knowing that no worse service could be done to Germany's internal peace.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that to weaken Austria-Hungary unduly is the surest way of driving her still further into Germany's hands. The more statesmanlike course would be to seek some solution which, by destroying the bond of identity of interest between the two empires, would take away the motive for the alliance between them, which bond is antagonism to Russia. None the less, it seems obvious that, in the event of the victory of the Allies, Austria-Hungary will not be able to leave the war as she entered it, and that in any event she must suffer an important curtailment of territory if a political status of stability and permanence is to be established in the east of Europe.



	Austria.	Hungary.	Total.
Germans ... ..	9,950,000	2,037,000	11,987,000
Magyars ... ..	11,000	10,051,000	10,062,000
Czechs and Slovaks... ..	6,436,000	Slovaks 1,968,000	8,404,000
Poles ... ..	4,968,000	—	4,968,000
Ruthenians ... ..	3,519,000	473,000	3,992,000
Slovenes ... ..	1,253,000	—	1,253,000
Serbs ... ..	2,543,000*	1,106,000	5,482,000
Croats ... ..		1,833,000	
Italians ... ..	768,000	—	768,000
Roumanians ... ..	275,000	2,940,000	3,224,000
Foreigners ... ..	583,000	278,000	1,052,000
And others ... ..		191,000	
	30,306,000	20,886,000	51,192,000

\* Including 1,760,000 in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Broadly, the races are localized as follows : *Germans*: In Austria almost the entire population of the provinces of Lower Austria, Upper Austria, Salzburg, and the Vorarlberg is German ; of the population of Carinthia and Styria three-quarters and two-thirds respectively, of that of Tyrol and Silesia one-half, and of that of Bohemia and Moravia about a third are German ; while elsewhere the number of Germans is small. In Hungary there are about two million Germans. *Magyars*: The Magyars predominate over the whole of Hungary, except in several districts where the Serbo-Croats and the Roumanians outnumber them. Of the largest of the Slavic races the *Czechs* and *Slovaks* are found chiefly in Bohemia and Moravia, where they form about two-thirds of the population, the northern districts of Hungary, and to a smaller extent in Silesia. All but half a million of the five million *Poles* in Austria inhabit Galicia, the rest being in Silesia and Bukovina. The *Serbo-Croats* chiefly inhabit Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia, where they are almost entirely homogeneous, but there are smaller colonies in the coastal territories. The *Ruthenians* or Little Russians preponderate in the east of Galicia and in parts of Bukovina. The *Slovenes* are specially numerous in

Carniola, Styria, Carinthia, and the Coastland. In Austria the *Roumanians* are almost entirely confined to Bukovina, in Hungary to Transylvania and the Banat. Finally, the *Italians* are chiefly concentrated in the Trentino (the Tyrol) and Trieste, with scattered groups on the Dalmatian coast. Even so summary an indication of the geographical division of the minor races of the Empire as the foregoing, especially if traced with map in hand, will sufficiently suggest the great, and in relation to some of the races insuperable, difficulties in the way of any scheme which would entirely satisfy national aspirations.

What, then, should be the minimum demands of the Allies, assuming the absence of any desire to weaken Austria-Hungary beyond the limits imposed by a due regard for the principle of nationality and by the desirability of discovering an arrangement which would reduce for Austria herself the difficulties due to the complex character of her population? Here Russia's claims are by every right entitled to prior consideration, not only because she was dragged into the war by Austria-Hungary's folly, but because there can never be peace in the Near East until the causes of the racial antagonism between these two Powers have been removed. These claims relate first to Russia herself and then to the Balkan States, in which she is more interested than any other Power.

It is difficult to ascertain in the existing circumstances how far the territorial expectations of Russian statesmen go. Before the change of government following the revolution it was understood that all the Austrian territory sought by Russia consisted of Galicia and Western Bukovina, the former because its western half contains a homogeneous Polish population and its eastern half an equally solid mass of Ruthenians, and the latter because there likewise the Ruthenians predominate. Since March, 1917, however, a change has come over the spirit of Russian statesmanship, and the word "annexation" would appear to have lost its attraction in St. Petersburg. Considerations of prudence, however, point to the im-

portance of the territorial settlement being one which, in so far as the Allies may be able to ensure it, shall not only be acceptable to the present Government, but shall be one which it would not be the interest or desire of a restored monarchy—should that fall to Russia's lot—to repudiate. Hence a settlement which proceeded from the assumption that the Pan-Slavic movement is a pure myth, and that behind the antagonism between Russia and Austria, which has been so disturbing an element in the politics of Eastern Europe for a generation, there is no national sentiment whatever, might prove deceptive and in the end disastrous.

It is obvious that no republican Government would wish to annex populations against their will, and, for reasons already given, it is not probable that the Poles of Austria would prefer simple transference to Russian rule to their present lot under the Habsburgs, who have for a long time treated them well and would be likely to treat them even better in the future. It may, perhaps, be assumed that the Ruthenians would welcome union with their Russian kinsmen, and if they elected for the change some three and a half millions of them would be lost to Austria. On the other hand, the eastern part of Bukovina is chiefly populated by Roumans, and Roumania should receive this territory, together with the districts of Hungary (contiguous to her frontier) in which her people strongly predominate.

It is, however, even more essential to the creation of permanent peace between the two empires that the Balkan sore between them should be healed. The war of 1866, which ejected her from Germany, made Austria a Slavic rather than a German State; and the Berlin Congress of 1878 made her for the first time a Balkan State. Both of these transformations brought her into collision with Russia. No man who is honestly concerned that the plain facts of history shall not be submerged by the flood of controversial sophistry which the war has called forth will wish to ignore the fact that forty years ago Great Britain, in mistaken zeal for Turkey and suspicion of Russia, did her best

to keep back the rising tide of national aspirations in the Balkans. It was on the proposal of the British plenipotentiaries at the Berlin Congress that Austria was put in occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Great Britain gave her support to the occupation by the same Power of the Sandjak of Novibazar, the cradle of the Serbian race, to the division of the Bulgarias, and to the forcible detachment of South Bessarabia from Roumania, which received instead a slice of Bulgaria. In a word, she used every effort to prevent the creation of that strong bulwark of Slavic States, interposing between the present Central Powers and Turkey, which is now regarded as so essential. It was the absence of any enthusiasm for national aspirations in the Balkans which to Mr. Gladstone was the fatal defect of British Oriental policy at that time, and which led him to state in the House of Commons on July 30, 1878 :

I do not mean that the British Government ought to have gone to the Congress determined to insist upon the unqualified prevalence of what I may call British ideas. They were bound to act in consonance with the general views of Europe. But within the limits of fair differences of opinion, which will always be found to exist on such occasions, I do affirm that it was their part to take the side of liberty, and I do also affirm that as a matter of fact they took the side of servitude.

It is one of the many ironies of the war that a country which literally pushed Austria into her present position as a Balkan State is now specially interested in getting her out of it. For Austria the only course of safety is that she should retrace her steps and abandon once for all ambitions in a region where she has no right to interfere. The time has gone by for the application of half-measures to this part, at least, of the Slavic difficulty. It is doubtful whether the Serbo-Croats in particular will ever again settle down quietly in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and to frustrate their legitimate aspirations after unity with their Balkan

kinsmen would mean not the settlement but the still greater unsettlement of Europe.

If, therefore, the peace with Austria-Hungary should be a forced peace, it would be legitimate to detach from both monarchies, as far as geographical difficulties do not prevent it, all their purely Serbo-Croatian districts, with a view to the strengthening of existing Balkan States and the creation of a powerful federation of the Southern Slavic peoples. Serbia in particular would have a right to expect Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbo-Croatian provinces annexed by Austria in 1908, an act which brought her for the first time into acute antagonism with Russia, and paved the way for all the later Balkan troubles. This aspect of the problem, however, will be considered more fully in the chapter dealing with the future of the Southern Slavs.

Next in importance to Russia's claims are those of Italy. The last two Italian territories wrested from the Austrian lords of misrule were Lombardy in 1859, by the Peace of Villafranca, ratified by the Peace of Zurich, and Venetia in 1866, by the Peace of Prague—both cessions made in deference to Louis Napoleon. Nevertheless, there are to-day still three-quarters of a million of Italians in Austria, chiefly in the Tyrol and Trieste, and on the coast and the islands of the Eastern Adriatic. A much smaller number also inhabit various parts of Hungary, but they are too scattered to be detached. The hope of rescuing at least the majority of their countrymen from a lot which, in the larger centres of Italian population, is not only unsympathetic but oppressive, has made the war for Italy another war of liberation and unity. No peace settlement could be real which left open the vexed question of the *Italia irredenta*, and it may be taken for granted that the Italian district of the Trentino will be Italy's first prize of victory. She will probably in addition insist on the cession of the city and seaport of Trieste.

The delimitation of the part of the Trentino that should come to her should create no serious borderland

difficulties. It is different with Trieste, since the rest of the Istrian peninsula, to which it is a vestibule, is inhabited almost exclusively by Serbo-Croats and Slovenes, the transference of whom to Italy could confer advantage on neither side. "When Garibaldi said, 'Men of Trieste, to your mountains!'" wrote the historian Freeman in a letter of September 1, 1890, "he hardly knew that they would find the mountains inhabited by Slavs. I see my way with Trent and Cattano; I don't see it at Trieste, and the Lord of Trieste has a better claim than in some other places." Trieste is essentially an Italian town, though it has been in Austrian hands for half a millennium, and Italy's claim to be reinstated there is as strong as in the case of the Trentino. As for the interior, the choice would appear to lie between its remaining in present hands or being attached to the South Slavic State which may be formed with Serbia as its centre.

While it is clear that Trieste will have to pass to Italy, if it is not to become German at a later date, many and strong considerations speak in favour of its being made a free port—free, that is, for customs purposes only, and for the rest subject to the full political sovereignty of Italy, and not merely internationalized under a shadowy Italian police jurisdiction. As the natural outlet to the sea not only of Austria but of a large part of Southern Germany, and the principal commercial entrepôt of the Eastern Mediterranean, Italy could not fairly claim to include it in her customs territory. To do that would go far towards destroying most of its present transit trade, and might even ruin altogether its prosperity. Trieste is Austria's only mercantile port, and to cripple the reduced monarchy further by refusing it free communication with the Mediterranean would be a measure of needless severity.

Another claim upon which Italy lays stress is the cession to her of Dalmatia, the coastal region lying between the Adriatic and Bosnia. This territory has a compact population of more than 600,000 Serbo-Croats. There are old Italian colonies at various points on the



coast, but the total number of Italian inhabitants does not exceed 20,000, and though Italy professes to base her claim to Dalmatia on historical grounds, it is not concealed that the real attraction of this territory is the strategical advantage which would be conferred upon her by the possession of a coastline far less vulnerable than the low-lying western littoral of the Adriatic and the additional ports which would pass into her hands. The frustration of her hopes in this region would undoubtedly occasion great disappointment in Italy, but the fact of prior claims cannot be overlooked, and it is a fact that Dalmatia has from time immemorial been regarded as an essential part of a future South Slavic State. Certainly the transference of its solidly Slavic population to a rule which would be alien to it in race, religion, and political thought would be contrary to the principle of nationality which has been the watchword of the Allies from the beginning of the war and would inflict a severe blow upon the cause of Serbian unity.

By the loss of Dalmatia the enlarged Serbia would also be deprived of its natural outlook on the Adriatic. One of the highest interests of Italy after the war will be that she should cultivate relations of the utmost confidence and friendship with the little nations which will look over the waters of the Adriatic into her eastern windows. To give to Russia and the Slavic races under her protection a sense of grievance would be a bad omen both for Italy and the peace of the Balkans and of Europe. It may be hoped that the fair-minded statesmen and leaders of public opinion in Italy will come to recognize this danger, and, even at some sacrifice of interest and pride, will cease to press a claim the satisfaction of which would leave the Slavic question more unsettled than it need be, and be fraught with possibilities of serious mischief. In return for such abnegation Italy should be able to look for compensation in Asia Minor, where a large sphere of influence might be assigned to her.<sup>1</sup>

It is obvious that repartition on the lines suggested,

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VIII, pp. 199, 200.

or indeed any alternative lines, would leave out of account many remnants of races geographically so unfavourably situated as to be incapable of transference to new political units. This is regrettable and will be a source of deep mortification, but it is unavoidable. Is there any hope of alleviating the position of these scattered communities by a systematic scheme of intermigration? Might there, for example, be an exchange, as between different parts of the Empire, of Poles and Germans, Germans and Czechs, Serbo-Croats and Magyars, and so on? Where the minorities are small such a plan might succeed within certain limits, but, on the other hand, the grievance in such cases is not so urgent. The practical difficulties in the way of transplanting minorities obviously increase with the size of the populations concerned, and when the minorities are counted by the hundred thousand the prospect of any tangible relief from a measure of this kind is very small. The best that can be done in such cases is to assure the overshadowed races the utmost freedom to live their own lives and cultivate their own peculiarities of language, custom, and institution without hindrance or molestation, and the more liberal and secure these guarantees can be made, the greater will be the prospect that even the isolated minorities will feel comfortable under the new conditions.

Roughly, the population which would be lost to Austria by the cession of the territories predominantly inhabited by Serbo-Croats (including those of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Slovenes, Ruthenians, Roumanians, and Italians, would be about eight and a half millions. Hungary, by the cession to the new South Slavic Federation of the principal portion of Croatia-Slavonia and to Roumania of the districts of Transylvania with a predominant Rouman population, would lose about five and a half millions. In this way four of the Slavic races of the Dual Monarchy, representing nearly one-half of its entire Slavic population, would be transferred almost bodily to their natural groups.

There remains the vexed question of the future of

Bohemia. No race at present under Austrian rule has put forward with greater insistence its claim to the restoration of its political unity than the Bohemians, who have played so prominent a part in the history of Central Europe in the past, and placed civilization under so many and great obligations, yet whose existence as an independent nationality ceased with the battle of the White Mountain in 1620. The Czechs and their near kinsmen the Slovaks of Bohemia and Moravia are estimated to number together about six and a third millions in an aggregate population in these provinces of nine and a third millions. In addition there are some 125,000 Czechs in Silesia and nearly two million Slovaks in the northern districts of Hungary.

The friends of an independent Bohemian State propose that not only Bohemia and Moravia, but Silesia and the parts of Northern Hungary in which the Slovaks predominate, should be amalgamated for that purpose, so creating a kingdom with an area of some 50,000 square miles, about the size of England, and a population of twelve millions. There does not appear to be agreement upon the question whether this State should be a monarchy or a republic, but before the recent constitutional change in Russia it was suggested that personal union with that country might be acceptable.

Apart from the territorial difficulties in the way of the creation of such a State as is proposed, the fact that of the inhabitants of the new Bohemian kingdom only about two-thirds would be Czechs and Slovaks, while the great majority of the remainder, to the number of over three millions, would be Germans, four hundred thousand more being Magyars and Poles, suggests prospects of a friction surpassing any yet experienced in these territories in the past. A Bohemia so reconstituted would be the negation of the very principle of nationality which the Czechs evoke in aid of their cause. It might be a well-deserved retribution which placed minorities of Germans and Magyars under the heel of the races which have been in subjection so long, but two wrongs never yet made a right, and the fierce resentment which such an artificial

scheme would arouse not only in the new Bohemia, but in the rest of Austria-Hungary and in Germany, would be a bad beginning for a reconstructed Habsburg Empire.

The case of Bohemia and Moravia admirably illustrates the fallacy of an assumption which vitiates not a little speculation upon the future of the subject races both of Austria-Hungary and Germany. Populations are assumed to be locally homogeneous when they are not, and it is a feature of some of the changes which are proposed that they would actually place under a new alien rule larger populations than those which would be liberated from the old. I quote at random the words of a recent public lecturer on the projected Bohemian State: "The Czechs of Bohemia and the neighbouring lands, with the people of Moravia and Slowaquil, must form a solid wedge of Slavs." But a Czech kingdom formed out of these territories would not form a solid wedge of Slavs at all, for it would be weakened by a strong German and a less strong Magyar element. A fairly homogeneous Czech kingdom could only be created by greatly curtailing the population and area to be incorporated, and even so a considerable dilution of Teutonism would still be inevitable, for, apart from a large amount of racial diffusion, strong enclaves of Czechs are often found in German surroundings and *vice versa*.

It cannot be supposed that an arrangement which took three millions of Germans bodily out of Austria and placed them under their old enemies the Czechs would be good for the race so amalgamated against its will, for the Czechs themselves, or for Europe. To exalt a single nationality in such a manner would simply mean to exchange one form of ascendancy for another, and so to perpetuate the very evils of which the subject races of Austria-Hungary have suffered in the past.

Nevertheless, the Czechs, for their part, cannot be kept in the old bondage; they have waited long for deliverance, and to ignore altogether their national claims would be a heartless proceeding. The alternative to an independent State, which could hardly expect to stand, even if it were possible to establish it at all, is the

addition of a third member in what is now a dual partnership, with all the autonomy and rights which Austria and Hungary severally possess at present. In support of this federal solution of the problem the fact may be recalled that the Czechs themselves have been willing federalists in the past, and that soon after the establishment of the Dual Monarchy they would have been well content with such an arrangement. This was in 1871, when, during the short Ministry of Count Hohenwart, a scheme was offered to them which was virtually that of an Austro-Bohemian *Ausgleich* or Compromise on the lines of that already arranged with Hungary. Their unwillingness to make concessions, however, when the Government found it impossible to carry the scheme through in its complete state, wrecked whatever chance may have existed at that time of a permanent understanding.

The new third kingdom would embrace, as far as geographical conditions allowed, all the districts of Bohemia and Moravia with a predominant Czech and Slovak population together with the contiguous Slovak districts of Hungary. Such a solution would perhaps as little satisfy the extremer section of the Bohemian national party as it would please those Germans and Magyars who would be incorporated, but it would realize the substance of Bohemian ambitions without incurring the risks of the bolder scheme. Even the two minority races would dislike such an arrangement far less than one which would entail complete political separation from their kindred in the two other monarchies, and their objection might in any case be weakened by the guarantee of complete civil, political, and religious equality and the protection of their culture generally.

In an empire so reorganized there would be no longer large nationalities arbitrarily lording it over small ones. The Czechs and Slovaks would remain, but in a kingdom in which they formed a majority so strong as to make a renewal of their past oppression impossible. For the rest, the Germans and Magyars might safely be trusted still to hold each other in check, not less effectively than

hitherto. That the power of the Austrian Germans would be weakened by such a political division as is proposed could only be to the advantage of Austria as a whole.

A further question remains to be considered, and it is the future relationship to Germany and Russia of a Habsburg Empire consisting in the main of five races, the Germans, Magyars, Cezchs, Slovaks, and Poles, instead of an ill-balanced assortment of ten or twelve. German statesmen are honestly convinced that Austria-Hungary's only hope of continued existence lies in her dependence upon the Northern Empire, and it is probable that the majority of Austrian and Hungarian statesmen in their present mood believe the same thing. For Austria-Hungary as at present constituted, and still clinging to her unsatisfied and impracticable Balkan ambitions, the assumption is perfectly true, but it will be true only so long as the existing political conditions continue. It need not be true for the future, however, if the Allies succeed in relieving her of the incumbrances which have in the past proved so serious a source of internal division and hence of weakness, and have brought her into conflict with Russia. This will be done in proportion as the Slavic races are liberated from German and Magyar rule.

It is Austria's misfortune that she has aspired to be at once a German and a Slavic State. The events of the last thirty and especially of the last ten years have made it clear that if she is to continue to exist at all it must be on a basis that is substantially German. It sounds like paradox, but it is none the less true that in order to be greater Austria must become less. It is the tragedy of her present position as a State that she has so little that is truly Austrian and altogether her own—neither mountains nor rivers, neither history nor culture, neither national consciousness nor, since Germany has taken her in charge, her own soul. Such a reduction as is proposed could not fail to give to her greater vitality and inner strength. If Austria frankly accepts that fate and recognizes once for all that there is no room in the Slavic world for a Pompey alongside a Cæsar, a new and more useful future may still await

her. Bismarck used to say that he had "unlimited confidence in the capacity of the Vienna Government for blundering." It is of far greater importance for Austria than for any other European Power that she should not on this occasion misread the signs of the times. With the removal of the old source of friction with Russia, the motive and need for the Austro-German alliance would from Austria's standpoint disappear. Relieved of the more troublesome of her Slavic subjects, it is certain that she would never fight side by side with Germany in order that Prussia might retain hers.

If the foregoing argument is sound, it follows not only that the Powers can have no urgent reason to desire the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but that the balance of argument and of advantage for Europe is overwhelmingly the other way. What is needed is an Austria emancipated from German influence and control. That emancipation cannot be effected by direct means, but it may be expected to follow naturally when, owing to a new orientation of Austrian foreign policy, the causes which have made her dependent upon outside assistance no longer operate. At present the alternatives before Austria-Hungary are that she must either be liberated from her powerful neighbour or become more than ever its slave.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SOUTHERN SLAVS

"It generally so happens that the ostensible cause of a war does not embrace the whole or even the strongest motives which impel States to resort to the last extremity. A peace, to be satisfactory and lasting, must satisfy all the objects for which the war has been undertaken."—*The Prince Consort on the proposals for a basis of peace with Russia, November 19, 1854.*

"It may appear Utopian, but we can never expect the individual elevated until a practical and better code of moral law prevails among nations, and until the small States obtain justice at the hands of the great."—*Richard Cobden, October 29, 1862.*

"They (the Balkan races) were like the shelving beach that restrained the ocean. That beach, it is true, is beaten by the waves; it is laid desolate; it produces nothing; it becomes perhaps nothing save a mass of shingle, of rock, of almost useless seaweed. But there is a fence behind which the cultivated earth can spread, and escape the incoming tide; and such was the resistance of Bulgarians, of Servians, and of Greeks (to Mahomedan rule). It was that resistance which left Europe to claim the enjoyment of her own religion and to develop her institutions and her laws."—*Mr. Gladstone, quoted in John (Lord) Morley's "Life of Gladstone," vol. i., p. 477.*

"I am for nations, great or small, as may happen."—*E. A. Freeman, August 19, 1888.*

"This is pre-eminently the day of little nations. . . . Their destiny is interwoven with that of humanity."—*Mr. Lloyd George, September, 6, 1917.*

"The result (of the second Balkan War of 1913) has been an excellent example of the danger of basing such calculations on purely material factors such as territory or population, and ignoring moral forces such as national consciousness and international comity. . . . The settlement of Bucharest was imposed against the teaching of equity, of ethnography, and of experience in professed pursuance of a Balkan balance of power."—*"Nationalism and War in the Near East," by "A Diplomatist," pp. 354, 356.*

THE problem of the Balkans, as we know it to-day, has virtually been narrowed down to the problem of the future of the Southern Slavic races. It may be formulated in the question, How can these races, in conjunction with their kindred in the existing Austro-Hungarian Empire, be brought into such a political relationship as will satisfy



their aspirations after unity, give free play to their ethnic peculiarities, and afford them mutual security against menace from within and without? Slowly but surely the conviction has won its way, not only amongst allied but amongst neutral nations, that such a settlement of the Slavic question is an absolute condition of peace, whether in the Balkans or Eastern Europe generally. The great source of discord, unrest, and war in the Balkan area in the past has been the disunion and consequent weakness of the races there. Fourteen years ago (1903) the essence of the Balkan difficulty was stated by Mr. A. J. Balfour in a Mansion House speech in words which, though they related to past phases of the question, still point to the dangers which will have to be averted in the coming settlement.

The weaker Power (he said) first leans on one European Government, then upon another European Government, intrigues with both, does everything to bring the two into conflict, in the hope that it may come out the better for it and the great danger which this carries with it to European peace. Nothing can meet the danger but the growing sense among the nations of Europe that they must work together to produce common harmony of action, and that the best way to attain that result is by an open and frank diplomacy between them.

The first and most essential condition of a sound and durable solution of the Balkan problem, therefore, is that the problem shall cease to afford an occasion for jealousy and wrangling amongst the greater Powers. To this end the Balkan Governments and races must no longer be subject to the temptation, or be in a position, to become rival aspirants for the favour and protection of the neighbouring empires. To recall the transformations which the relationships of Bulgaria and Serbia with Russia and Austria-Hungary have undergone since 1878 is sufficient to focus attention at once upon the greatest source of past mischief. The Treaty of Berlin created the principality of Bulgaria and formally placed it under the protection of Russia. By consenting, however, to the occupation by Austria of Bosnia and Herzegovina,

in accordance with a secret treaty concluded with that Power at Reichstadt two years before, Russia bitterly disappointed Serbia, who in resentment turned from St. Petersburg to Vienna. In conformity with the relationship then established, Bismarck, whose great concern it was to keep on good terms with both Germany's neighbours, was accustomed for a long time to formulate his Balkan policy in the words: "In Bulgaria we are Russian, in Serbia we are Austrian."

So long as the status established by the Treaty of Berlin lasted, this principle worked well, but in course of time a new orientation took place, reversing the relationships of the rival empires to their *protégés*; for while Bulgaria, after her unification in 1885, shook herself free from Russian influence, Serbia gradually passed beneath it. In the ignoble quarrels of the Serbian reigning house which ended in King Milan's abdication in 1889, Austria took the side of the King and Russia that of the Queen and her son Alexander, with the result that on the latter's succession Russian influence again became paramount at Belgrade. Austria's action in annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 finally convinced Serbia that her interests were bound up with those of Russia and could only be protected with Russia's assistance.

For a short time following the formation of the Balkan League in 1912, Bulgaria likewise seemed to have returned to the Russian fold, for in that year she entered into an alliance with Serbia by which the two States pledged themselves to common military action against Austria-Hungary in certain eventualities. Serbia has since remained wholly under the protection of Russia, as the patron of the Slavic races, while Bulgaria, first yielding to Austrian influences soon after the first Balkan War, has ended by becoming the close ally of the Central Powers against the country which called her into existence.

The history of the past forty years emphasizes the fact that the problem of the Balkan States, besides being a problem of races, is one of political equilibrium. The condition of a permanent Balkan peace, therefore, is the creation of such a status as will allow of hearty co-

operation between these States and destroy the motive for outside conspiracy. The solution of this problem will involve throughout constructive work of the most difficult and delicate kind, and success will be secured only as a result of perfect accord and goodwill amongst all the States concerned, both great and small, and of an "open and frank diplomacy" in which no Government will follow selfish or particularist interests or stultify its co-operation by secret reservations or contradictory commitments of any kind.

Public opinion, both in the Balkan States and amongst the Allies, is fairly agreed that federation in some form is the only practical way of realizing the ideal which was expressed some time ago by Prince Alexander of Serbia, when receiving a deputation of British sympathizers—"the union in one single fatherland of all the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, who are one people, with the same traditions, the same tongue, the same tendencies, but whom an evil fate has divided." The truth of the closing sentence may be illustrated by the fact that at the present time the Serbs and Croats of Eastern Europe are under the rule of five separate States, viz. Austria, Hungary, Turkey, Montenegro, and Serbia. The murdered Archduke Francis Ferdinand was known to favour the granting of a liberal measure of autonomy to the Slavic races now under Habsburg rule, but it is understood that he would have abolished the existing dual arrangement in favour of a centralized system of government, in which all the Slavic races would have been federated as a single unit, so that there would henceforth have been a single monarchy composed of three autonomous populations. Had some genuine federal scheme been introduced a generation ago and given a fair trial, it is possible that it might have greatly softened racial feeling and strengthened the Empire internally, though the alternative, that it might have accentuated the Slavic problem as a whole, by making Austria more ambitious and aggressive in the Balkans, and therefore have merely accelerated her rupture with Russia, is at least conceivable.

The formation of a South Slavic federation should be

the easier, inasmuch as in Serbia there exists already a State which would naturally serve as the nucleus round which the other communities would be able to coalesce without any sense of inferiority. Serbia also, in virtue of her greater strength, higher political status, and more advanced social organization, would be able to afford to her allies a helpful guidance. Like the rest of the Balkan countries, Serbia is essentially a peasant State, with no great differences of social condition and hitherto no marked disposition to depart from its primitive ways. Nevertheless, the strongly developed democratic instincts of the people, the existence in their midst of a growing leaven of progressive ideas, and the great prominence given to Serbia by the political events of the last few years are a guarantee that this gallant little nation will not stand still. Referring to the Serbs of the present day, the well-informed authors of "The War and the Balkans" say :

The present war has proved more strikingly than ever the brilliant military quality of the Serbs; they are not the less redoubtable in the field because they are deeply sentimental and devoted to poetry and art. Their national songs, or rather epics, pieced together by wandering bards and handed down by oral tradition, are part of the education of every child. Their character resembles the Russian in many respects. They have the dreaminess of the Slav, his mercurial changes of feeling, his childlike devotion to the Church and its ceremonies, its light and colour, its consolations; but they are conscious of a marked difference, and while feeling a deep sympathy with their fellow Slavs, they set their faces towards the West, send their young men to study at Paris, and claim for themselves a civilization more practical and more progressive.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of its chequered past, and of certain notorious facts in its political annals which, until the war showed the world of what valour and heroism its people were capable, had brought its name into ill-odour in Western Europe, none of the Balkan States is so suited as Serbia to be a pioneer in civilization in that hitherto troubled

<sup>1</sup> "The War and the Balkans," by Noel Buxton, M.P., and Charles Roden Buxton, pp. 45, 46. [George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.]

region, and there is no ground for doubting that it would, under fairly favourable conditions, discharge this function successfully. The position of Prussia in relation to Germany, ever since she became strong enough to dispute the Austrian hegemony in the old Germanic Federation more than two generations ago, affords ample proof of the value of such a strong leadership. It is true that in political matters Prussia's influence has in many ways been retarding and pernicious, but it is also unquestionable that her predominant position has given solidity and stability to the German Empire by restraining the old mutual jealousies, and that in social and economic progress she has set the other States a rapid pace to which they have been compelled to accommodate themselves. Prussia has, in a word, served as a powerful centripetal force, so counteracting the many ever-recurring centrifugal influences which, without her presence and pressure, might have delayed indefinitely the cohesion of the Empire and possibly have driven the German races again apart.

In a South Slavic Federation Serbia would admirably fill the same valuable function, but with less danger of friction and countervailing disadvantages than in the case of Prussia, whose discipline, while its utility has never been denied by her allies, has always been felt as oppressive and unsympathetic. In other words, Serbian hegemony must not mean domination; in this respect the example she would need to keep in view would be rather Piedmont in relation to Italy than Prussia in relation to Germany. Serbia's leadership would be the more acceptable since the peoples which would be embraced in the new federation are united by strong racial ties and affinities; their common bond of Slavism, whose effect in the Austro-Hungarian Empire has been merely disintegratory, would in a union of their own prove the most powerful of cohesive forces.

A strong Serbia is necessary for another reason. More and more as the war has progressed it has been realized how important is the part played in the tragedy by this unhappy State. The smallest of the Allies actively involved in hostilities, Serbia is now recognized as the

key to the objective which the Central Powers had in view from the beginning—that of “hacking a way through” to the Middle East. The glamour of this ambitious design has been dimmed by the rout of the Turks in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor, but safeguards will need to be provided for the future. Germany’s hope of establishing herself upon the ruins of the Turkish Empire would be shattered if the Sultan were ejected from Europe, Constantinople internationalized, and Russia placed on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmora, but security against such a menace would be further increased if there were interposed between the Central Empires and the Bosphorus a strong barrier of free Slavic nations with an augmented Serbia as its centre.

It is doubtful whether the time is ripe for any wholesale incorporation of adjacent Slavic territories in the Serbian kingdom, and the Serbs themselves neither expect nor desire such aggrandizement. The joint declaration of the Serbian Government and the South Slav Committee of July last in favour of the creation of a “kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes,” in which Serbia and Montenegro should be merged, the joint crown falling to their dynasties alternately, has not been endorsed by the two peoples, still less by King Nicholas. Nevertheless, in order the better to serve as the firm nucleus of a Jugo-Slavic Federation, Serbia will need to be enlarged and strengthened, and this would best be done by the addition to her of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and also Dalmatia, for not only is Dalmatia a territory too small both in area and population to be left to develop a precarious existence as a separate territory, but it is bound to go where Bosnia and Herzegovina go.<sup>1</sup> Serbia’s greatest grievance in the past has been that, owing to Austria’s persistent opposition, all her efforts to obtain access to the sea either on the Adriatic or the Ægean have been frustrated. Such an accession of territory would give her in the West a long seaboard, with excellent ports.

<sup>1</sup> “If we Serbs become masters of Bosnia, as we hope and believe we shall, and if Dalmatia be retained by Austria, or given to Italy, we must fatally and inevitably work to become sooner or later masters of our own country, Dalmatia” (Count Chedomille Mijatovich, “Memoirs of a Balkan Diplomatist,” p. 230).

Beyond this the unity of the Southern Slavic communities would have to be sought on a federal basis, and it should not be difficult to convince even the most self-centred of them that in federation lies the strongest hope of their future peace and prosperity, and perhaps the only guarantee of their safety as independent communities. With Serbia so enlarged would, therefore, be joined, as autonomous territories, the kingdom of Montenegro, whose people are marked by a strong individuality, but whose civilization is rather picturesque than progressive, and the territories of Austria and Hungary in which the Serbo-Croats and Slovenes predominate, in so far as geographical obstacles do not impose insuperable difficulties, viz. Croatia, Slavonia, and portions of Carniola, Carinthia, and perhaps Styria and Istria, with a status higher than that of provinces and lower than that of principalities.

It might be a good arrangement if the little non-Slavic principality of Albania, which was declared autonomous by the London Conference of December, 1912, yet whose experiment in dynasty-founding has not proved the success which the Powers hoped, would throw in its lot with the federation, though the probability of its so doing is very slight. Too small to develop on lines of its own, it is obvious that the present or ultimate alternative to such incorporation on equal terms is absorption by Italy. With an area of less than 11,000 square miles, largely mountainous, and a population of little more than three-quarters of a million, handicapped by very limited natural resources, an utter absence of progressive aspirations, and a dangerous propensity for disorder and turbulence, Albania is something of an anachronism even in the Balkans, where everything seems from the Western standpoint crude and abnormal. Italy covets the protectorate of Albania less from any conviction of a civilizing mission there, an enterprise to which indeed the Albanians would probably be slow to respond, than from a desire to control as much of the eastern seaboard of the Adriatic as possible. It will be remembered that early in the war Italy, for strategical

reasons, occupied the excellent Albanian port of Valona, and it may be that the imperialists in that country are counting upon its permanent retention. For a long time Italy has sedulously and successfully cultivated popularity in Albania ; whether her popularity would stand the strain to which an open avowal of aggressive purpose would expose it, may be doubtful. There is, however, a Serbian side of the question of Albania's future status which cannot safely be overlooked. If Italy possessed Valona, it could only be with the object of fortifying it and making it a naval and military stronghold. But a Pola in such close proximity would probably be regarded by the new Slavic State as a wanton menace, and it would certainly prove a source of friction between nations which have a common interest in the cultivation of relations of amity and confidence. All the objections, in fact, which apply to an Italian occupation of Dalmatia apply almost equally to the case of Albania.<sup>1</sup>

The peoples themselves would need to determine the strength of the federal tie which should unite them ; but it might be wise to draw the cords of union as loosely as possible at first, leaving them to tighten of their own accord as warmth of feeling between the different communities increases. Each of the territories would have a parliament, with full control over purely internal affairs and meeting in its own capital, while the federal legislature, whose functions would need to be very deliberately thought out and carefully defined, would probably meet at Belgrade.

The answer to those who fear the prospect of the Balkan States passing under the political influence of Russia is that to strengthen these States, and above all

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written Italy has, through the commander of her army of occupation, declared "the independence of the whole of Albania" under her protection (June 5, 1917). Speaking in the Italian Chamber of Deputies on June 20th, on the future of Albania, the Foreign Minister, Baron Sonnino, while referring to "our certain and direct possession of Valona and its territory," said that "Italy has no other object than to defend Albania against every possible interference or intrigues on the part of a third Power. Italy will guarantee to Albania the full right to dispose of herself as regards internal affairs." It was made clear that the independence of the principality as an international State was not contemplated.



to strengthen Serbia, is the best way of making them independent of Russia or any other Power. The attachment of the Serbs to Russia and their feeling of unity with the Russian people are strong, but stronger still is their ambition to be an independent nation, and Russian assistance has been welcomed only as it has contributed towards that end. Count Chedomille Mijatovich, the ex-Minister of Serbia, has recently emphasized the Serbian national standpoint as follows :

Most of Serbia's people were always Russophile. Every Serb knows that Serbs and Russians are ethnographically first cousins, that we are both members of the great Slav family, that we belong to the same Church (Orthodox Eastern Church), and that our Church services are identical in rites and language (Old Slavonic), and that our colloquial languages are very similar though not quite identical. And every Serbian takes almost a personal pride in the greatness and power of Russia. . . . But Serb Russophiles do not go so far as blindly to allow themselves to be absorbed by Russia and transformed into Russians.<sup>1</sup>

A Jugo-Slavic Federation formed on the principles outlined above would have roughly the following area, population, and racial composition :

Territories to be Federated.	Area in Square Miles.	Population.	Predominant Races.
Serbia, present frontiers ...	33,890	4,548,000	Serb
„ Bosnia & Herzegovina	19,770	1,898,000	Serbo-Croat
„ Dalmatia ... ..	4,960	646,000	„
Total ... ..	58,620	7,092,000	
Montenegro ... ..	5,600	516,000	Serb
Carniola ... ..	3,850	526,000	Slovene
Parts of Carinthia, Styria, and Coastland (say one-half)	8,000	1,367,000	{ Serbo-Croat and Slovene
Croatia and Slavonia ... ..	16,420	2,622,000	Serbo-Croat
Total ... ..	92,490	12,123,000	
Albania (problematical) ...	11,000	825,000	
Total ... ..	103,490	12,948,000	

<sup>1</sup> "Memoirs of a Balkan Diplomatist," pp. 31, 32.

All these races are prolific stocks, and with peace and settled government, and the many social ameliorations which these would bring in their train, their populations would rapidly increase. Serbia, for example, before the war had a birth-rate little below 40 per 1,000 of the population, and a rate of natural increase, in spite of an excessive mortality, half again as high as that of the United Kingdom.

It is, nevertheless, clear that in any scheme that may be devised these races will for a long time have to be regarded as foster-children of the Powers, which will need to assume joint responsibility for their good government. It would be well if the constitution of the Jugo-Slavic Federation withheld from the individual federated territories, whatever their political rank, the right to conclude political treaties with foreign Powers or with one another. Another provision, of equal importance, should ensure the reference of internal and international disputes to arbitration.

It may be that such a federation would have to encounter initial dangers more serious than the common maladies habitual to infant nations. The normal condition of the Balkans has long been that of chronic unrest, disorder, and war. So accustomed have the Balkan peoples been to refer their grievances and differences to the arbitrament of force that it may be no easy task to win them at once and altogether to pacific ways. It will be instructive to observe how far these races are able to overcome the power of evil traditions, and to give practical effect in their future relationships to the principle of "live and let live." Oppression is a bad school for the finer virtues of nationality or citizenship, and as the author of "Nationalism and War in the Near East" says, "Each (Balkan) nation has emerged from the warfare of Turkish misrule with their virtues all their own, but with defects in common that were due to that rule" (p. 377). "Turkish oppression," write two other capable students of Balkan politics, "has resulted in a type of nationalism which regards intolerance towards other nationalities as a source of its own

strength." <sup>1</sup> Here the temptations to backsliding are obvious, and they will need to be carefully watched.

There is also the religious question: how far will this prove in quieter times, when the older and larger occasions of friction have disappeared, a source of difficulty? The Western and Eastern branches of the Catholic Church will be powerful rivals in the new State, and neither of them has the best record for suavity and toleration. Apart from the Poles, who will form a small and scattered minority, two of the Slavic races which will be represented in the federation are strongly Roman Catholic, viz. the Croats and the Slovenes; while the Serbs belong to the Orthodox or Greek faith, and the Albanians are a mixture of Moslems, Greek Catholics, and Roman Catholics. There has been serious friction between the confessions in Serbia in the past, and the bitter experience of religious antagonisms which the Slavic races of Austria and Hungary will bring with them may as easily make for intolerance as its opposite. There is, however, reason for hopefulness in the fact that these races have been gradually brought closer together by common misfortune and needs, and that their union, if consummated, will not be an artificial creation but a natural development of events.

In order that the Balkan peace may be a peace all round, however, it will be necessary to do more than bring the Slavic races together. Three other States still complain of grievances unredressed and rights unrecognized, and unless Roumania, Bulgaria, and Greece come into the settlement, the work of the peacemakers will be only half done. It should not be difficult to satisfy Roumania if Russia receives liberal compensation in Asia Minor.<sup>2</sup> For Roumania not only expects, as we have seen, the cession by Austria-Hungary of the parts of Bukovina and Transylvania in which her people predominate, but claims back the part of the province of Bessarabia which was taken from her by the Powers at the Berlin Congress of 1878, in exchange for the

<sup>1</sup> Noel Buxton, M.P., and Charles Roden Buxton, in "The War and the Balkans," pp. 47, 48.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter VIII, pp. 193-199.

Dobrudja region of Bulgaria, and given to Russia. By this forced exchange Roumania lost a Rouman and gained an alien population, and she has resented the injustice ever since. In the interest of future friendship and a general settlement of outstanding discords it would be well worth Russia's while to give way on this question. These three accessions of territory would add to Roumania a homogeneous population of some four millions—the maximum transference would be from Bukovina three-quarters of a million, from Transylvania three millions, and from Bessarabia a million, but a large deduction would need to be made for geographically isolated groups, which could not be handed over—so giving this progressive and fairly well-governed kingdom a total population of eleven millions, which would make it numerically the equal of the Jugo-Slavic Federation.

With this State Roumania would be certain to live in good accord. Her action in the second Balkan War of 1913, in turning the campaign in favour of Serbia and her allies, placed the Slavic races under great obligation to her, for not least it compelled Austria to stand forth in her true colours as the implacable enemy of the Jugo-Slavic movement and the real centre of Balkan disturbance. All that the Powers can do for Roumania in reason, therefore, would have the full approval of the other Balkan States with the single exception of Bulgaria, who has not yet forgiven her for having in 1913 snatched from her hands the spoils upon which she had confidently counted. Roumania has no other desire than to live her own separate life, independent of Russia on the one hand and of the Serbian group of races on the other, but she has every reason to cultivate cordial relationships with both. The Bessarabian question adjusted on a fair basis, she would resume her prosperous course and become a more important element than hitherto in the stability and development of Eastern Europe.

The future position of Bulgaria amongst the Balkan States may appear at the present moment obscure, yet, given the success of the Allies, there can be little doubt as to what it will be her interest to do. The Bulgars are

counted in the Balkans as a people apart ; they have little affinity with the other races, and are only distantly related to the Slavic family. For the Slavic cause they have never professed to have enthusiasm, nor have they made sacrifices for it except when their own interests might be served. There is a large amount of crude human nature in the Bulgars, and because it is crude it is unreservedly egoistical. The action of King Ferdinand in joining the Central Powers in the present war has exposed the whole nation to much reprobation, but even if Bulgaria has by this last act of treachery completed her title to be regarded as the "Judas of the Slavic race," there is something to be said on the other side.

Apart from the risks which she feared to incur by identifying herself with the Allies—fears which, as the later experience of Roumania showed, were not unfounded—Bulgaria has borne no love for Serbia since the second Balkan War of 1913. When Bulgaria agreed to join the Balkan League in the previous year she concluded with Serbia a separate treaty (February 29, 1912), under which the two States were to annex contiguous portions of Macedonia, Serbia in the north and north-west (including the Novibazar district), Bulgaria in the east (including Monastir). By the Treaty of London (May 17, 1913), which ended the first war, so victorious for the League, Bulgaria was to have secured a large extension of territory to the south, with a frontier running from the Ægean to the Black Sea, but this treaty was never ratified. Meantime, Serbia by the occupation of Durazzo, on the Albanian coast, seemed to have obtained her long-sought access to the sea. Once again, however, Austria interposed, and to her opposition the Powers deferred. Mortified by the rebuff, and suspecting Bulgaria of having played her false, Serbia repudiated the treaty of 1912 and claimed Macedonian territory which had been assigned under it to her ally.

Russia's endeavours to conciliate the rival claimants (the treaty between them having provided for such mediation) having failed, Bulgaria brought matters to a head by declaring war upon both Serbia and Greece, who

were later joined by Roumania. If Russia instigated the formation of the Balkan League, she certainly strove to prevent the second war, while Austria-Hungary encouraged it. "The Balkan States," said Count Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, "can decide for war; we shall, of course, regret it, but the decision is within their right." Very grave doubts must be entertained about this regret. Beaten in the unequal contest which she had precipitately provoked, Bulgaria was compelled to accept hard terms of peace. By the Treaty of Bucharest (August 10, 1913), she forfeited the greater part of the territorial gains which she had secured by the Treaty of London, as well as her share of Macedonia, which Serbia and Greece proceeded to divide; by the loss of Kavalla in particular she lost her outlet on the Ægean. Roumania had occupied the Bulgarian portion of the Dobrudja during the war, and there she remained, so annexing a population of three hundred thousand, of whom a third were Bulgars, a third Turks, and only one in forty a Rouman.

The extent to which the Balkan States in general benefited in territory, almost wholly at Turkey's expense, by the Treaty of Bucharest, is shown by the following figures:

	Old Area in Square Miles.	New Area in Square Miles.	Present Area in Square Miles.
Serbia ... ..	18,650	15,241	33,891
Montenegro ... ..	3,474	2,139	5,603
Bulgaria... ..	33,647	6,860	40,507
Greece ... ..	25,014	16,919	41,933
Roumania ... ..	50,720	2,969	53,489

In addition Albania was made an independent principality with an area of 10,810 square miles. Turkey altogether ceded an area of 55,300 square miles.

However much Bulgaria may have been at fault, the harsh treatment meted to her at the end of the second

Balkan War has rankled deeply, and the fact must in fairness be set against her reluctance and final refusal to fight alongside with the neighbours who had treated her so ill.

The question whether the prodigal son of the Balkans will detach himself from evil associations and return to his proper place in the Slavic household is not difficult to answer. If the Allies succeed, no other course will be possible. A glance at the map will show that Bulgaria would in that event be isolated in the midst of three States now hostile to her—Russia and Roumania in the north, Serbia in the west, and Russia again in the south, in the event of her taking the place of the ejected Turk in Constantinople. Even if, therefore, interest did not tempt her, necessity would compel her to return to the fellowship which she unwisely deserted the year before the war. As a reward for so doing it is greatly to be desired that Bulgaria's territorial claims would be indulgently considered. The Treaty of Bucharest has few defenders. The able author ("A Diplomatist") of "Nationalism and War in the Near East" speaks of it as an impossible settlement because "imposed against the teachings of equity, of ethnography, and of experience, in professed pursuance of a Balkan balance of power" (p. 356), and it will unquestionably have to be revised.

What Bulgaria would like is the restitution of the boundaries assigned to her by Russia and Turkey in agreement in 1878, before the Treaty of San Stefano was superseded by the Treaty of Berlin, but, like a good bargainer, she would be prepared to accept less. It has been suggested that a satisfactory settlement might be secured on the basis of the return to her of the part of Macedonia appropriated by Serbia in contravention of the treaty of 1912, and of the Dobrudja district annexed by Roumania in 1913, with an extension of territory in Thrace. It has been said that weak States have ever been the bane of Balkan politics in the past, and to strengthen Bulgaria by a final increment of territory, which would leave her a finished State with no expectation of and need for further expansion, would be an

important contribution towards the establishment of a settled peace in the Near East. By her ingratitude to the Power which gave her independence Bulgaria has, perhaps, forfeited any right to Russia's sympathy, though it is fair to remember that for this ingratitude the ruler and his advisers rather than the nation should be blamed. Many old grudges, however, will have to be swallowed down if a good peace and a settled future are to be won for that part of Europe.

The position of Greece need not occupy us here, inasmuch as since the last great Turkish settlement of 1913 her further claims and expectations have centred rather in Asia Minor than in Europe. The concessions to Greece which may be possible in that part of the Ottoman Empire will therefore be considered in the chapter which deals with the general question of the future sphere of Turkish rule.



## CHAPTER VIII

### TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

"As a matter of humanity I wish with all my soul . . . that the Sultan were driven bag and baggage into the heart of Asia."—*Stratford Canning, September 29, 1821.*

"We entertain no fears that our interests would be likely to suffer from the aggrandizement of a Christian Power at the expense of Turkey, even should that Power be Russia. On the contrary, we have no hesitation in avowing it as our deliberate conviction that not merely Great Britain, but the entire civilized world, will have reason to congratulate itself the moment when that territory again falls beneath the sceptre of any other European Power whatever. Ages must elapse before its favoured region will become, as it is by nature destined to become, the seat and centre of commerce, civilization, and true religion; but the first step towards this consummation must be to convert Constantinople again into that which every lover of humanity and peace longs to behold it—the capital of a Christian people."—*Richard Cobden, "Political Writings," vol. i., p. 33.*

"Turkey cannot enter into the political system of Europe, for the Turks are not Europeans."—*Ibid. p., 270.*

"I do not believe that any Power at this time entertains the intention of weakening the Turkish Empire, but it is certainly true that any quarrel might lead to this event, or that it might take place without such a deliberate intention on the part of any one of the Powers."—*Lord John Russell, February 15, 1853.*

"If I find the Turk incapable of establishing a good, just, and well-proportioned government over civilized and Christian races, it does not follow that he is under a similar incapacity when his task shall only be to hold empire over populations wholly or principally Orientals and Mohammedans. On this head I do not know that any verdict of guilty has yet been found by a competent tribunal."—*Mr. Gladstone (1877), "Gleanings of Past Years," vol. iv., p. 364.*

THE empire of the Caliphate has during the past forty years shrunk almost to a shadow of its former grandiose proportions. In Europe the liberation by the Powers of province after province from 1866 forward culminated

in the great act of emancipation which followed the second Balkan War of 1913. The creation of the principality of Albania and the cession to Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Montenegro of territories having an aggregate area of 55,000 square miles, left the Sultan's European dominions reduced to Constantinople, Adrianople, and the intervening stretch of territory, a remnant having an area of about 10,880 square miles and a population of 1,891,000. Turkey in Africa has gone altogether. France led the way in spoiling it when she annexed Tunis in 1881; Italy in revenge took Tripoli in 1912; and the conversion of Egypt since the war broke out into a formal dependency of the British Crown has completed the work of extinction. Meantime, Asiatic Turkey remained intact, apart from the foothold which Russia obtained in Armenia in 1878. The area of this empire is still 700,000 square miles, and its population, as population is estimated in countries not under settled government, some nineteen and a half millions.

Turkish rule is dying because no longer fit to live, and whatever further restriction may be in store for it when the conditions of peace are arranged will be part of a long-continued and inevitable process of disintegration. More than a hundred years ago Stratford Canning, then beginning that acquaintance with the Turk and Turkish rule which was to become so intimate and ultimately to take so sinister a direction, wrote, "Destruction will not come upon this empire either from the North or from the South: it is rotten at the heart; the seat of corruption is in the Government itself."<sup>1</sup> Since then the Turk has been offered many opportunities of reforming himself—pre-eminently those of 1856 and 1878—but all have been disregarded, and more and more his existence as a ruling force in a civilized continent has become not merely an anomaly but a crime. The description applied by the historian Freeman to the kingdom of Hanover, as extinguished in 1866, as "a patched-up thing answering to nothing either in nature or history,"

<sup>1</sup> Letter of 1809, quoted in "Life of Stratford Canning," by Stanley Lane Poole, vol. i., p. 31.

holds good with far greater fidelity for European Turkey to-day.

Lord Derby, at the time Foreign Secretary, said in 1875, "Twenty years ago, by the Treaty of Paris, we guaranteed the Sick Man against being killed: we did not guarantee him against committing suicide." The Sick Man did not commit suicide just when Lord Derby expected, but was fated to prolong still further a somewhat disreputable old age. He made an attempt to commit the rash act, however, when, after accepting the German Emperor's effusive friendship in 1898, he gradually turned away from the Powers which had long been concerned, far beyond his deserts, for his reformation, and finally threw himself entirely into Germany's arms. More and more Turkey now became an avowed partisan and a divider of the nations, and in the same measure the preservation of her rule on this side of the Bosphorus ceased to be a European interest. This was seen when in 1912 the Balkan League took the question of Turkish misgovernment out of the hands of the Governments and diplomats who had been tinkering at it for a century. When, as the result of the first Balkan War, Turkey was at the mercy of her enemies, no Power in Europe was willing to run risks on her behalf. Owing to the split in the League in the succeeding second war, in which some of the earlier allies fought against each other, she was able to draw herself together somewhat and to recover some of the territory which had been wrested from her hands. Nevertheless, by the Treaty of Bucharest of August 10, 1913, her European dominion was reduced to an area only half again as large as Wales, just large enough to allow the Turk to continue a nuisance without being a danger to the Continent.

When the present war began Turkey remained for a time outside hostilities; her sympathies were suspected, but there seemed a chance that she might still review her position and agree, if not to take sides with the Allies, at least to observe towards them an attitude of benevolent neutrality. In electing to fight against them she sealed her own fate; if the Allies come out of the struggle

victorious, no Powers except Germany and Austria-Hungary will be wishful or willing to see Turkish rule retained at all in Europe, or even to perpetuate it in Asia except in a severely circumscribed area and under strict surveillance.

Already the Sultan's power in Asia is tottering. If it should be broken in Constantinople, Turkish prestige will suffer a shock from which it would not recover. The question which will then confront our statesmanship would not be whether the Turkish Empire should be, but whether by any possibility it could be, maintained in the changed conditions. Left alone after Mohammedan authority had disappeared from the Golden Horn it would prove a source of perpetual intrigue and a constant invitation to aggression. Assuming the disintegration of the Sultan's dominions to be inevitable, therefore, it would be infinitely better that the Powers should feast upon the spoils in deliberate and decent fashion than elbow each other rudely and fall out in an unseemly scramble for the most delectable morsels.

The local bearings of the problem of the partition of the Sultan's heritage will be better understood by the aid of figures showing the greater administrative divisions of European and Asiatic Turkey, with their estimated areas and populations. The figures are those published by the "Statesman's Year Book" for 1916:

	Area in Square Miles.	Population.	Population to the Square Mile.
<b>EUROPE :</b>			
Constantinople ... ..	1,505	1,203,000	799
Chatalja ... ..	733	78,000	82
Adrianople ... ..	8,644	610,000	77
	10,882	1,891,000	187
<b>ASIA :</b>			
Asia Minor ... ..	199,272	10,186,900	52
Armenia and Kurdistan ...	71,990	2,470,900	34
Mesopotamia ... ..	143,250	2,000,000	9
Syria ... ..	114,530	3,075,100	33
Arabia ... ..	170,300	1,050,000	6
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>710,224</b>	<b>21,273,000</b>	<b>30</b>

No exact enumeration of the inhabitants as to race and religion exists, but the following figures, taken from the same source, represent the confessional composition of Asiatic populations which are estimated to contain thirteen and a quarter million inhabitants, or 68·5 per cent. of the entire population of Asiatic Turkey :

	Mussulmans.	Armenians. <sup>1</sup>	Other Christians.	Jews, etc.	Total Population Enumerated.
Asia Minor ...	7,179,900	576,000	972,300	84,600	8,912,800
Armenia ...	1,795,800	450,700	165,200	30,700	2,442,400
Aleppo (Syria) ...	792,500	49,000	134,300	20,000	995,800
Beyrout (Syria) ...	230,200	6,100	160,400	136,900	533,600
Lebanon (Syria) ...	30,400	1,081,800	1,432,200	49,800	399,500
		319,300			
	10,028,800	2,833,300		422,000	13,284,100

Until early in the present year (1917) it seemed unlikely that there would be any serious difference of opinion amongst the Allies as to the influence which would in future dominate in Constantinople, in the event of Ottoman rule there being overthrown. From the beginning of the war Russia repeatedly let it be known that as part of the price of her sacrifice of men and treasure she must be allowed to replace the Crescent by the Cross in the Mosque of St. Sophia, and also have control of the Straits, thus settling once for all the vexed question of the navigation of the Black Sea and providing an all-the-year-round water outlet for Russian trade. It is also understood that at an early stage the Allies signed an undertaking in which these claims of Russia were formally recognized.

Towards that solution of the question of Turkish rule

<sup>1</sup> Mr. A. J. Balfour recently informed the American Committee for Armenian Relief that "of the 1,800,000 Armenians who were in the Ottoman Empire two years ago 1,200,000 have either been massacred or deported." Horrible as the Turkish atrocities in Armenia have undoubtedly been, it may be hoped that these figures will admit of a welcome revision when the facts become better known.

in Europe events seemed to have been steadily moving for the better part of a century. It would have been part of the bold scheme of partition unsuccessfully proposed to the British Government by Czar Nicholas I in 1844, the remaining features being the division of the Balkan peninsula amongst the Balkan peoples and the appropriation by Great Britain of Egypt. Since then Russia has repeatedly been warned against turning her eyes to the Bosphorus, yet while no longer making formal claims to this part of the Sick Man's heritage, she has let it be clearly understood that if it ever ceased to be Turkish it would be allowed to pass into no other hands but her own. Bismarck went further, for he was ready to allow Russia to install herself in Constantinople long before Great Britain had ceased to fear that prospect. Soon after he had chosen Austria-Hungary to be Germany's ally in 1879 he made up his mind that whenever Russia thought that the time was ripe for ousting the Turk from Constantinople he would not raise a finger in resistance, and in later years his utterances to this effect were frequent and open.

The entire situation has been changed, however, by the fall of the Czardom and the hostile attitude adopted by the new Russian Government to annexations in general, and to the idea of appropriating Constantinople in particular. Nevertheless, if that attitude is persisted in and it falls to the Allies to determine the future of Ottoman rule, a thorny problem will have been made much easier of settlement. Theoretically several other ways of disposing of Constantinople are still possible. One is to leave it in the present hands, trusting to the growing weakness of Turkey to prevent future mischief. But the danger of retaining a weak Power at Constantinople has already been proved. It is just because Turkey was weak that she fell a prey to Germany's seducements and became her tool. So long as the Turk remained in command of the Bosphorus, the symbol, at least, of Moslem power would continue there, and with it the fear that under German influence Constantinople might become still more a centre

of intrigue against British rule in Mohammedan countries.

As events have moved during the past few years it might have been only advantageous for British interests had Constantinople fallen into the hands of a Power like Russia, which could have no desire to contest our occupation of Egypt or threaten the highway to the Far East. But Turkey to-day and in future would mean Germany, and German writers have been careful to give us fair warning to that effect. One of the best known of them, Dr. P. Rohrbach, wrote in a book published before the war (the italics are his own) :

A direct attack upon England across the North Sea is out of the question ; the prospect of a German invasion of England is a fantastic dream. It is necessary to discover another combination in order to hit England in a vulnerable spot, *and here we come to the point where the relationship of Germany to Turkey, and the conditions prevailing in Turkey, become of decisive importance for German foreign policy, based as it now is upon watchfulness in the direction of England. . . .*

England can be attacked and mortally wounded by land from Europe only in one place—Egypt. The loss of Egypt would mean for England not only the end of her dominion over the Suez Canal and of her connections with India and the Far East, but would probably entail the loss also of her possessions in Central and East Africa. The conquest of Egypt by a Mohammedan Power, like Turkey, would also imperil England's hold over her sixty million Mohammedan subjects in India, besides prejudicing her relations with Afghanistan and Persia. Turkey, however, can never dream of recovering Egypt until she is mistress of a developed railway system in Asia Minor and Syria, and until, through the progress of the Anatolian railway to Bagdad, she is in a position to withstand an attack by England upon Mesopotamia. . . .

The stronger Turkey grows, the more dangerous does she become for England. . . . Egypt is a prize which for Turkey would be well worth the risk of taking sides with Germany in a war with England. *The policy of protecting Turkey, which is now pursued by Germany, has no other object but the desire to effect an insurance against the danger of a war with England.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Die Bagdadbahn," pp. 18, 19.

A writer of equal authority, Professor Hans Delbrück, recalling in an article in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* for January, 1917, Bismarck's saying that Egypt is the "spinal cord of the British Empire," urges that it must be the object of Turkey's policy to regain her old position on the Nile. "This will be all the easier," he writes, "should Turkey build railways which would connect distant provinces and permit the entire military power of the Empire to be swiftly concentrated in Palestine and the Sinaitic peninsula. Should the Suez Canal be lost, the bonds which unite the different parts of the world-empire will be slackened."

The moral of these calculations is that it must be placed beyond the power of Turkey to be any longer a menace to us, and the first step towards checkmating her is to put an end to the last remaining traces of Turkish dominion on this side of the Bosphorus. That done, Constantinople (whose population is only half Moslem) might be dealt with in one of two ways. It might be converted into an autonomous City State, with a republican form of government, under the protection of the Powers, which should support its head, the rest of the three remaining Turkish vilayets in Europe being divided between the contiguous Balkan States. Alternatively it might be formally internationalized, a solution favoured by many authorities familiar with Turkey, and amongst them Sir Edward Pears, who speaks with the knowledge gained by forty years' residence in the country. The plan of an internationalized Constantinople might, indeed, satisfy Germany and her allies in extremity, while many of Russia's friends would welcome it as overcoming their objections to its occupation by any single Power. It is probable that the Balkan States also would prefer that solution.

It would be necessary to stipulate that Constantinople should be a free commercial port, that it should no longer be fortified, and that the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora, and the Black Sea should be open waters, free to all nations. An arrangement that would thus make Constantinople no longer the centre of a military



empire, but an entrepôt for the trade of South-eastern Europe, would be a great stride towards the permanent pacification of that part of the Continent. In its administration the influence of the Great Powers of Europe should in some effective way be counter-balanced by the small States or by the United States of America.

Whether and how soon the appearance of Russia in the Mediterranean might affect the position of Great Britain at the western end of that sea is a question which statesmanship may be well content to leave to be determined by events. It was John Stuart Mill's contention that Gibraltar, like all other places having command of closed waters, should be in the hands of a League of States, and when the nations have given satisfactory hostages of a desire for permanent concord such a solution of the question might not be prejudicial to British interests.

The horoscope of Near Asia, which has in the course of the war acquired in the eyes of the belligerent Powers an importance so much greater than ever in the past, has not hitherto been equally definite. Here again, however, Germany must be thanked for throwing light upon the situation, for the disclosure of her sinister plans and purposes has enabled the Allies to recognize more clearly the general lines which the adjustment should follow. Germany's motive in dragging the Sultan into the war has been to use him for the realization of her ambitious design to dominate Asia Minor and the regions beyond. Dr. Rohrbach has accurately stated the situation which would arise if Germany were cut off from the Near East.

What will happen (he asks in his book "The War and German Politics") should the British and Russians drive in a wedge between us and our plans in the Orient? The independence of Turkey would be gone, the countries between the Straits and the Gulf, between Port Said and Ararat would be partitioned among our enemies. What would happen to us should we never again be able to exercise influence there? It is clear that this would be the end of our *Welt-politik*. It would mean our withdrawal from the company of world-nations.

Whatever may be the future of Germany's *Welt-politik* and her ambition to be in the foremost rank of world-nations, the interests of the other Powers require that such a wedge as is here referred to should at all costs be driven in between Central Europe and Asia Minor, and in all the circumstances a Russian wedge would be the most effective. Russia, therefore, might be planted upon the Asiatic mainland opposite the Sea of Marmora, which she should undertake not to fortify, and upon the southern littoral of the Black Sea, and also receive as her part of the Middle East the whole of Armenia and perhaps Kurdistan. She already holds several points in Armenia, and the conversion of the rest of this Turkish province, so long a scene of misgovernment, disorder, and rapine, would give both to Moslems and Christians—as Christians are in that part of the world—the steadying hand and firm discipline which they need if they are to be redeemed from anarchy. There would be peculiar historical justice in such an arrangement. Russia took a humanitarian interest in the Ottoman Empire long before she claimed material interests therein, or formally became the champion of the Slavic races beneath its rule. It was one of the ambitions of Czar Alexander I at the beginning of last century to emancipate the Christian subjects of the Sultan, and the influence of Great Britain more than of any other Power prevented the adoption of any extreme measures to this end for two generations.

Russia's conspicuous services to this cause in the past would be fittingly crowned by the pacification of Armenia, whose warring races will have no hope of a settled future until they come under a rule at once stronger and more progressive than that of Turkey. Both geographically and politically Russia is marked out for the accomplishment of this greatly-needed task. The form of suzerainty to be established, the degree of local autonomy to be granted, and the measures by which religious liberties would have to be secured to Moslem, Christian, and Jew alike are questions in the

determination of which the rest of the Powers might fairly claim to have a voice.

The assignment to Russia of this sphere of influence in the north of Asiatic Turkey would be the first step towards dispelling for ever Germany's hopes of first peacefully penetrating and perhaps later appropriating the rich territories of Asia Minor and the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris. So far as British interests are concerned, the Berlin-Bagdad railway would thus be robbed of serious menace.

Authorities differ as to whether the destruction of the Sultan's power in Europe would produce violent convulsions in the Moslem world of Asia and Africa, a question of special importance for Great Britain, which rules the greatest of Mohammedan empires. The risk, if it is one, will have to be taken, as it has been taken in a minor degree more than once before. Nevertheless, a safeguard might be afforded by re-establishing Turkish government in Asia Minor, where it might with perfect safety be given a new lease of life, for Asia Minor is the cradle of the Ottoman Empire, and is still to-day the heart of Moslemism. This reformed Turkish dominion might be given direct access to either the Sea of Marmora or the Black Sea, or to both, and it may be assumed that, by the migration of the Christians and the influx of Mohammedans, it would in course of time become the home of a more or less homogeneous population. The adjoining Powers would need security for order and good government, however, and this would probably be obtained best by placing the Sultan under formal Russian protection.

In the further partition of Asia Minor, Italy would have a strong claim to consideration, and this claim might be met by giving to her what remains after the Russian and Turkish spheres of influence have been determined and something has been done for Greece. Above all, Italy's long-standing desire for the reversion of Cilicia should be gratified. The establishment of Italy in Asia Minor could only be welcomed by Great

Britain, whose special interest it is that the control of the Mediterranean should be placed upon as wide a basis as possible. Nor is there any danger of friction between these two countries. Occasions of misunderstanding between Powers like Great Britain and France, whose interests meet at so many points, may occur in the future as they have occurred in the past, though none that should not be capable of easy and friendly adjustment. No such shadows need fall upon the relationships between Great Britain and Italy, while the strengthening of these relationships would tend to complete harmony between all the three Powers. In June, 1912, during the Tripoli War, Italy occupied some of the Ægean Islands, proclaiming them autonomous, and she has since remained in possession. Presumably she will now be less ready than before to withdraw from these positions.

The sorry part which has been played by official Greece in the war might be held to absolve the Allies from any obligation towards her. Nevertheless, it would be unjust to punish the whole nation for the fickleness of its ruler. Some of the islands of the Ægean might properly be assigned to her, and if in addition she received on the mainland the essentially Greek city and district of Smyrna, with a suitable hinterland, she would have done better than she deserved.

Cyprus, which Lord (Sir Edward) Grey offered to Greece at a critical moment in the negotiations with King Constantine early in the war, happily remains in British hands. Hitherto Lord Beaconsfield's trophy of the Berlin Congress of 1878 has not been greatly valued, and there was a time, soon after its annexation, when its retention seemed uncertain. This was in February, 1881, when, during the administration of Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Goschen wished to conciliate Turkey, then painfully negotiating with the Powers upon the Greek frontier question, by restoring the island to her. Lord Granville endorsed the idea, but on submitting it to some of "the cooler heads of the Cabinet" he received no encouragement, and the

proposal was regarded as *non avenu*.<sup>1</sup> It is likely that Cyprus would acquire increased importance under the changed conditions in Asia Minor as a sentinel post from which movements in the Levant might be observed.

More difficult, and more disputable, ground is entered upon when we come to discuss the future of Mesopotamia and the region stretching beyond Bagdad to the Persian Gulf. It would be inexcusable to allow this fertile country to remain longer under Turkish rule, which has failed hitherto to develop its resources, and in the future would at the best only do so in order the more selfishly to exploit them, without any regard for the subject population. Some persons, accepting this view, have suggested that the entire valley of the two rivers should be internationalized. It is more than doubtful whether such an arrangement, even if practicable, would work satisfactorily or prove of long duration. The Oriental mind can grasp both the ideas of authority and of anarchy, but Asiatics would fail to understand, or fall in with, a system of government under which they would be the subjects of no one in particular, and in the absence of a fixed and personal sovereignty, the country might become more than ever an arena for mischievous intrigue.

If, therefore, the idea of a neutral territory must be rejected, the alternative might appear to be annexation by one of the Great Powers. Which Power should this be? Perhaps in the opinion of most English people to ask that question is to answer it. What other Power than Great Britain could so properly lay claim to this region, through which lies a future great high-road to the East, a region also bordering on Persia, where we have already incurred responsibilities? Only considerations of an overwhelming character, however, could justify so great an addition to "the load Atlantëan, well-nigh not to be borne" of our existing imperial burdens, and the balance of probability is that it would, in Seeley's words, "increase our responsibilities without increasing our power."

The suggestion which follows may at first sight be

<sup>1</sup> "Life and Correspondence of Viscount Goschen," vol. i., pp. 221, 222.

received with misgiving. It is that Mesopotamia, as far as a line to be drawn north of Bagdad, should become the special sphere of influence of Germany in Asiatic Turkey. In a book written ten years ago<sup>1</sup> I urged the importance of meeting sympathetically Germany's craving for outlets for her rapidly increasing population and commercial enterprise, and then invited my countrymen to accustom themselves to the idea of Germany finding scope for her colonizing energies in this region. At that time there was no reason to apprehend the melancholy turn which Anglo-German relationships have since taken. The Morocco Agreement had, indeed, been concluded, but few people then imagined that the issues which it raised would become so critical as to bring Europe twice within a few years within sight of war. The commercial rivalry between this country and Germany still continued as before, with even greater vigour, yet with abating friction. Germany, indeed, had never had any cause for complaint, for the pressure came altogether from her, and she was steadily making headway in all the markets of the world. The bitterness caused by the early colonial feuds seemed also to have died down, and the activities of the German "big navy" party had not yet convinced the British Government of the day that there was any reason for alarm. There seemed every reason, therefore, why this country should do its utmost, while relationships were fairly free from tension and promised to improve, to convince Germany that its policy was one of "live and let live."

Long before the outbreak of war the position in the Middle East had changed entirely, and the immediate cause was the political significance which had meantime been acquired by the Bagdad railway project. Whatever Germany's ideas in planning this railway may have been originally—and it is legitimate to believe that its first promoters were actuated by purely commercial and industrial considerations—there can be no doubt that economic considerations gave way more and more to political as the scheme suggested to conspiring statesmen

<sup>1</sup> "The Evolution of Modern Germany," Chapter xviii.

in Berlin and Vienna larger possibilities and more ambitious objectives.

The war has led to a great abandonment of reserve on all sides, and German publicists, and particularly those of the colonial and Pan-Germanist schools, no longer conceal the fact that they aim at asserting for their country a predominant influence in Asia Minor as a first step to extending its influence over Mohammedanism in general. Near Asia now appears to Germany in a new light—no longer as merely a field for legitimate commercial enterprise or an outlet for surplus population, but as a means of menacing British influence in the East, and if need be, as a base from which to strike a blow at India.

If, however, Germany wants "a way to the Orient" for purposes which are avowedly aggressive, it cannot be to the interest of the other European Powers in general to make it any more direct and easy than it need be. Certainly it would be in the highest degree unwise for Great Britain in particular, disregarding the warnings which have been given so openly, to put Germany in a position to do her harm. It seems to me possible, nevertheless, to protect ourselves by all due safeguards and still to concede to Germany "a place in the sun" in the Middle East. Great Britain's special interests in that region centre in the Persian Gulf, the proposed terminus of the Bagdad railway. If, therefore, Russia and Italy held the northern portions of Asiatic Turkey from the Sea of Marmora to Mesopotamia and Great Britain commanded the Tigris valley from Bagdad (inclusively) to the Gulf, we should have taken all the precautions required by a proper regard for the security of our Eastern Empire.

Between these spheres of influence there is a large and delectable region which might be thrown open to German enterprise and colonization, and in which Germany would be able to benefit herself without being inconvenient or dangerous to her neighbours. The fact that Mesopotamia's present density of population is no more than nine persons to the square mile—comparing

with 310 in Germany—suggests the extent to which pressure might be relieved at home by emigration carried out with State assistance or, as would certainly be the case, under State direction.

The idea of making any such attempt to meet Germany's imperialistic ambitions may on first thoughts seem quixotic, and the prospect of pacifying her thereby an illusion. But in international concerns the good will often counts as much as the good deed, and I for one am not disposed to despair. The fact that Germany is now the active enemy of a score of countries, and in ill-repute with nearly all the rest of the world, should not blind us to the future or deter us from offering her even now any safe concession which would meet her justifiable desire for opportunities of expansion. The more reasonably that desire is met, the greater will be the likelihood of winning her back to ways of sobriety and sanity. It is a poor statesmanship that thinks only of wresting from an antagonist the utmost advantage, regardless of future possibilities, which are nowhere so incalculable as in politics.

It is also fair to remember that Germany's interests in Mesopotamia and Asia Minor are by no means all purely imaginary. More than two generations ago German writers like List and Rodbertus pointed across the Balkans and the Straits to Near Asia as a future field for German enterprise. If Germany was slow to follow the advice then given, she has during late years made up for past indifference. The extent and variety of her economic enterprise there, in the form of railway and other public works, mining, banking, and general trading, are familiar to all men. It is not so well known that a large amount of useful work has been done amongst the native population by the German doctors and teachers, who have long been settled in the large towns of Asia Minor and Syria, and incidentally have there become centres of political influence. Upon the value of the schools, hospitals, clinics, and similar agencies of cultural penetration, Dr. Rohrbach has insisted for many years, and it must be admitted that as a means



of propagandism this work has been accompanied by considerable success. It would, therefore, be wrong to assume that Germany is necessarily altogether unpopular in Asia Minor, and that her presence there in the future would be unwelcome to the native population. To her Mesopotamian protectorate Germany would need to have an entrance from the Levant either at Alexandretta or some minor port which might be made a free port under international control. It should certainly be impossible for her to create a naval fortress on that coast.

For Great Britain such a scheme of partition as is here proposed would have the inestimable advantage that it would effectively dispel Germany's dream of dominating and perhaps of ultimately annexing Asiatic Turkey. On the other hand, Germany would benefit with all the rest of the Powers by the opening up to trade of that still undeveloped region. A German Professor, lecturing recently before the Bavarian Geographical Society, volunteered the assurance that Germany "has no desire to conquer the Persian Gulf," and took it for granted that it would remain in British hands. "But," he added, "we shall insist on the open door for our trade. Our merchants who have been insolently driven away must be fully reinstated in their possessions and privileges. For the Persian Gulf also we demand the freedom of the seas." The Professor may feel at ease. Great Britain, which inaugurated the policy of the "Open Door," will not be likely to disown her own offspring.

There remain to be considered the claims of France. It is possible that, if nations were governed solely by pure reason, France might refuse the opportunity of establishing herself at all in the Eastern Mediterranean. She has secured a free hand in North-West Africa, where a consolidated empire of 627,000 square miles—without counting the vast area of the Sahara—is now subject to her immediate or prospective rule.<sup>1</sup> The development of that empire will long tax her statesmanship and her resources. Further, as the price of

<sup>1</sup> Algeria, 343,500 square miles; Tunis, 64,600 square miles; and Morocco 219,000 square miles.

British support on the question of Morocco, she agreed to give to this country a free hand in Egypt. It might be safer for both parties to that bargain if France would for the future confine her attention to her own special part of the Mediterranean and not, by acquiring new interests in the eastern basin, be put in a position in which she would be constantly peeping over the Egyptian wall and be thus reminded of the ancient claims which she has abandoned on the Nile. If, however, she looks for a share of Asiatic Turkey, it is plain that she will have to be satisfied in Syria, where she has a historical interest, as well as concessionary rights of a valuable kind. It should not be difficult to reconcile her claims in that region with those which may be advanced by Italy.

The future political control of Palestine would appear likely to pass to one of these Powers or to Great Britain. It might be a happy solution if a country which will always be sacred ground, as the cradle of the only universal religion which the world has ever known, were held in trust by the Powers as the patrimony of Christendom, but such an idealistic scheme is rather for the age in which Tancred lived than for the hustling twentieth century. It has been suggested that Palestine should be returned to the Jews, and if the Jews would only consent to go there, which they will not do, the proposal might be, as Lord John Russell said of a territorial scheme of his day, "a very good arrangement for Europe." In the absence of such a wholesale migration of population as this proposal would involve, however, the only effect of converting Palestine into a Jewish State would be to place in the hands of the leaders of the Hebrew race still greater political power than they now possess, a prospect not to be contemplated with satisfaction.

The best interests of Arabia would be served by interfering as little as possible—or, better still, not at all—in its internal affairs directly order has been restored. Arabia has declared itself free from Turkish rule, and the Allies will no doubt show every disposition to make

its liberation a reality and to assure its permanence, but beyond this the more they efface themselves the better. Civilization everywhere is a relative term—it is not a matter of plus or minus, but simply of more or less—and nothing but harm could result from forcing European notions of progress upon the East, where a thousand years are as a day. We have taught the East many good things, and the East has been our instructor in return, but one thing we cannot teach the East—how to live; and one lesson we refuse to learn from it—patience. After all, the East must be regenerated by the East; the freer it is kept from mechanical Western proselytism, whether religious or political, the more satisfactory and durable, if the slower, will be its progress.

It may be said that Great Britain would come worst out of such a partition as has been outlined. That view will not be shared by those who believe that Great Britain's Empire is already sufficiently large, and that her paramount interest should now be not expansion but consolidation. Still less will it be the view of those who are determined to keep in mind to the last the solemn pledges of disinterested intervention in the war which Mr. Asquith gave to the world in his country's name at the beginning of the war. Of the peace which followed the Crimean War it could be proudly said by the Prince Consort that it was "an example unparalleled in history, and helpful to the development of mankind, that two great nations could wage war with such enormous sacrifices and end it with clean hands, without deriving any individual gain for themselves, in the self-denying intention of standing up for the right and justice, of redressing wrong and averting it for the future." It will be a happy omen for the peace of the world if we of this generation act in the spirit of those words, so that it may not be possible for posterity, as it looks back upon the great struggle which we are still waging, to ask what Great Britain gained, save in honour, glory, and repute, by the part which she took in the struggle.

What we may, nevertheless, expect in addition is that the European Powers will formally regularize the position

of Great Britain in Egypt. We have annexed the country as an act of war, yet our strongest title to ownership still rests upon the work done and the sacrifices incurred on Egypt's behalf, and upon the expressed or tacit concurrence of several friendly Powers. Germany, in particular, though she agreed to our going to Egypt, and almost pushed us into the country, just as she pushed France into Tunis, has never formally acknowledged our right to remain there permanently. It is always unsatisfactory to be in a position which, however strong and justifiable in itself, can at any time be called in question by others, and now that, as we hope and believe, so many other territorial rights are to be confirmed or created, it is highly desirable that Great Britain's claim to retain the country which her armies and statesmen have remade should be given full and formal recognition by all the Powers, and thus have the sanction of public law.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE GERMAN COLONIES

"It is always a mistake to impose upon a Great Power conditions inconsistent with its sense of honour."—*John, Earl Russell (on the Treaty of Paris of 1856), "Recollections and Suggestions," p. 273.*

"I thank God we live in a time when it is impossible for Englishmen ever to make a war profitable. . . . No statesman ever was great unless he was carrying out a policy that was suited to the time in which he lived and in which he wrought up to the highest lights of the age in which he flourished."—*Richard Cobden, speech of November 23, 1864.*

"If Germany is to become a colonizing Power, all I say is, God speed her. She becomes our ally and partner in the execution of the great purposes of Providence for the advantage of mankind."—*Mr. Gladstone, in the House of Commons, March 12, 1885.*

"The honourable member . . . said that we had made a claim that we did not enter into the war with any desire of aggression. That is certainly true. I remember saying in this House that the British Empire was large enough, that I had no desire to see any addition to it, and that our business was to develop what we had. . . . We are not fighting for additional territory."—*Mr. Bonar Law, speech in the House of Commons, February 20, 1917.*

OF the various questions which will form part of the settlement, that of the disposal of Germany's colonial empire is pre-eminently one in regard to which Great Britain may be able to claim, even if she should not be invited by the Allies to exercise, a free hand. One reason for this is the fact that most of the Allies have little direct interest in Germany's colonies, but perhaps a stronger one is the fact that the task of subduing them and supplanting German by British sovereignty therein has been carried out in so large a degree by the adjacent self-governing British Commonwealths and colonies themselves, aided by Indian troops, and has been a part

of their particular service and responsibility to the Empire in the war.<sup>1</sup>

For the retention under the British Crown of German South-West Africa there is an insuperable argument in the strength of colonial sentiment upon the point, and in the importance of consolidating British dominion in that part of Africa. Moreover, German colonial rule is nowhere more unpopular than amongst the native population there. The Hereros will not soon forget how, after they had been goaded into revolt by the cruelties and heartless exploitation of German administrators and traders combined, they were ten years ago ruthlessly punished and decimated in a war in which "methods of frightfulness" so repulsive to the moral sense were employed that they received severe condemnation in the Imperial Diet and could not be defended by the Government. In "German South-West," at any rate, there will be no one to lament the disappearance of Germany as a colonizing Power.

Nevertheless, to insist on retaining even that territory arbitrarily as a formal prize of victory would be an unwise and unnecessary way of doing a wise and necessary thing. When you have beaten an antagonist there is no possible sense in rubbing salt into his wounds. Looking to the future, it would be prudent policy to make the retention of the country part of a general colonial settlement which should be a matter of free negotiation and be facilitated by exchanges of territory and even

<sup>1</sup> Thus the forces of the Union of South Africa and Rhodesia (with Imperial naval and military assistance) subdued German South-West Africa, and the Union Government has since administered it. South African troops have also fought side by side with British, Colonial, Indian, and Belgian troops in the bitterly contested campaigns in German East Africa. The Australian Commonwealth has ejected the governments of Germany from most of her Pacific colonies—part of New Guinea (Kaiser Wilhelmsland), the Bismarck (New Britain) Archipelago, and the Solomon Islands. The Dominion of New Zealand has taken over the Samoan Islands of Savaii and Upola. In West Africa, Togoland has been captured by allied British and French troops, assisted by the West African Frontier Force, and Cameroon by British, French, and Belgian forces. On the other hand, Japan has captured the Caroline, Pelew, Marianne, and Marshall Islands in the Pacific, and in the Far East has occupied Kiau-Chow, which she now holds nominally on China's behalf.

money compensation where unavoidable. On the occasion of Lord Haldane's visit to Berlin in February, 1912, the Governments of the two countries were ready to round off colonial angularities in various parts of Africa and elsewhere on the sensible principle of give-and-take. Perhaps after the war the negotiations then broken off will be resumed on a larger scale. If that were done Germany herself might not greatly mourn over the loss of a possession which has hitherto been a colony only in name, and has cost the German taxpayers far more than it is, or perhaps ever will be, worth as a commercial enterprise.

The case of German East Africa is different. Here likewise colonial sentiment is involved, for many gallant South Africans and other colonists, as well as Indians, have sacrificed their lives in the long and arduous campaigns which were necessary in order to supplant German rule. However strong the argument for retention may be on patriotic and sentimental grounds, however, considerations of policy and prudence cannot be ignored. The attitude of many advocates of retaliation is expressed in the words, "East Africa is Germany's best colony, therefore we should keep it." That is not the language of statesmanship. Rather the fact that this colony is both actually and potentially the most valuable part of the German oversea empire is a special reason for returning it. Here, too, German rule was in the past marked by a singular disregard of the interests of the native population, and except perhaps in Cameroon, nowhere else has the resulting crop of disorders and insurrections—always suppressed with an iron hand—been so numerous. For some time prior to the war, however, peace had become more settled; thanks to the reforms introduced by Dr. Dernburg, the system of administration had become orderly and efficient; the excesses of the German planters and traders had been severely suppressed; the economic resources of the colony were being rapidly developed; capital was being attracted in increasing amount; there was already a considerable production of tropical fruits, plants, and oils, which found their way chiefly to the mother country; and altogether

the colony seemed to have the prospect of a prosperous career. The progress made has been the work of more than a generation of administration and of commercial enterprise, and it has involved a great expenditure both of life and treasure. To tell Germany that she must regard all this sacrifice as incurred on our behalf would be a very short-sighted proceeding, which might one day cost us dearly. Subject to the payment of Germany of our war costs and such territorial adjustments as may be essential, including, perhaps, such a cession of territory as would make possible the realization of Cecil Rhodes' dream of an all-red route from Cairo to the Cape—if that project still appeals to practical men—it would be wise policy to restore this colony to the late ownership with a good grace, subject to the guarantees to be suggested later.

What has been said of "German East" applies with equal or greater force to Togoland and Cameroon, both amongst the oldest of Germany's acquisitions. On the other hand, it may be assumed that the Anglo-German convention determining the economic spheres of influence of the two Powers in the Portuguese colonies on the east and west coasts of Africa will not for a long time, if ever, be heard of again.

It might seem difficult to deal with the appropriated German colonies in the Pacific in any way that will altogether satisfy the sentiment of Australia and New Zealand short of refusing point-blank to return any one of them, yet here likewise a policy of discrimination is desirable. It is well to remember that to appropriate these territories without parley means placing a considerable German population under a rule which would be alien and unwelcome to it. The extent of this transference will be seen from the figures given on p. 213, relating to the year 1913.

In any case it is needless to talk of retention in virtue of conquest if the same object can be attained in other ways. The fate of the two Samoan islands now in British occupation will depend as much upon the attitude of the American Government as upon ourselves, since Ger-



many obtained them in 1899 under an arrangement by which the South Sea Islands were divided between her and America.

In considering the future of the German colonies we shall from first to last do well to keep the claims of sentiment well under control, and to consider what is our true and permanent interest, forgetting, if we can, the spirit of strife in which we are living, and setting later possibilities against immediate apparent advantages. Above all, it will be wise to bear in mind the disparity in the imperial possessions of the two countries, and to look at the question, in so far as it is meet and just, from the enemy's standpoint as well as our own. Bismarck

WHITE POPULATION IN GERMAN COLONIES IN THE PACIFIC.

	Total Number of Whites.	Number of Germans only.	Per Cent. of Germans.
New Guinea ... ..	968	746	77.1
Caroline, Pelew, Mari- anne, and Marshall Islands ... ..	459	259	56.4
Samoa (two islands) ...	544	329	60

used to say that whenever he was engaged in negotiations with either opponents or friends he never asked why the other side wanted this thing or that; it was sufficient for him that they did want it, and if he was able to give way he did so for the sake of prudence. That was why Bismarck never came out of a diplomatic tourney second best; he secured the things which were essential for him by conceding, as far as he was able, those which appeared to be essential to the other side.

Nor is the time appropriate for making further serious additions to the Empire's responsibilities. Never was the urgency of a policy of concentration as opposed to one of expansion so great as now that the mother country and the Empire are passing through an unexampled strain upon their resources in man and money power. It may take courage to say, "We have enough,"

and to leave what remains of the earth's surface—of which we have chosen the best—to others; yet such a renunciation, which would be not so much magnanimous as sensible, would repay us a thousandfold both in safety and repute. It has often been said, and in the main with truth, that Great Britain has been driven into most of her greatest imperial enterprises, at times even against her will. But no imperious necessity can be urged for the appropriation of large African territories which three years ago we neither desired nor felt the need of. It should also not be forgotten that in entering the war this country gave to the world a deliberate pledge that the war should not for us be one of aggression. To follow an indiscriminate policy of conquest in Africa would be faithlessness to our professions, and bring upon the national name lasting reproach. Only the most urgent need can reconcile a "war commenced for the propagation of ideas" with a "peace concluded by the acquisition of dominions."<sup>1</sup>

It is to the interest of Great Britain more than of any other country that Germany should be encouraged and even assisted to colonize, and to acquire a rightful "place in the sun." I have preached upon that text for twenty years, and to-day I am as convinced as ever, in spite of the war—and even because of it—that for the British nation this is a policy of prudence and safety as well as of equity. Sir Walter Besant says in one of his novels that there can be no more uncomfortable feeling than that of the man who is eating a good dinner while he knows that the table of his next-door neighbour is bare: Whether we are conscious of any moral twinges on the subject of empire or not, there can be no doubt that one of the reasons why Great Britain and Germany are at cross-purposes to-day is that the German Empire, both in Europe and across the seas, is becoming too small for the activities and ambitions of its people. We are apt to forget that though in British statesmanship it is almost a sin to

<sup>1</sup> Speech of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton in the House of Commons, April 26, 1860.

look far ahead, Germany is always speculating upon, and trying to provide for, the situations which may arise in the remote future. She is not satisfied that there is no overcrowding at home to-day and may be none a decade or even a generation hence ; she is thinking of the needs of her people, in space, markets, and raw materials for their industries, a century hence, knowing that the world is already almost parcelled out, and that this is her last chance of sharing even in the fragments that remain. Who with the British instinct of fairness can help sympathizing with a great nation which, owing to political disunion and impotence, missed the great opportunities of expansion which came to other and smaller peoples in the past?

Two very instructive tables are appended, and they will repay careful study, the more because I am not aware that the facts which they bring out have been presented in this way before. The first of the tables shows the area and home population of European countries with the largest colonial empires, together with the relative density of population, and the present rate of natural increase of population in every case. The second and more significant table shows for the same countries the extent of their colonial empire and its ratio to home population worked out in two ways. Spain is omitted from the comparison because her colonies to-day represent the diminishing remnant of a great empire which has gradually dwindled until it is now smaller than that of Denmark.

The tables on p. 216 show at a glance how the shoe pinches in Germany. Of the seven major and minor colonial States of Europe, Germany has :

- (a) The largest home population ;
- (b) The fourth highest density of home population ;
- (c) The fourth highest rate of natural increase of population ;
- (d) The largest number of home inhabitants to every square mile of colonial territory, and conversely ;
- (e) The smallest ratio of colonial empire to home population.

## POPULATION AND EMPIRE.

(1) *Area, Population, and Density of Population.*

State (and Year of Census).	Area in Square Miles.	Population.	Mean Rate of Natural Increase of Population per 1,000 Inhabitants, 1908-12.	Number of Inhabitants to the Square Mile.
United Kingdom (1911)	121,633	45,371,000	10.6	373*
France (1911) ... ..	20,7054	39,602,000	0.8	190
Germany (1910) ... ..	208,780	64,926,000	13.1	310
Denmark (1911) ... ..	15,582	2,775,000	14.5	178
Holland (1914) ... ..	12,582	6,340,000	14.8	504
Portugal (1911) ... ..	35,490	5,958,000	13.2	153
Belgium (1910) ... ..	11,373	7,424,000	8.1	652

\* England and Wales 618, Scotland 160, Ireland 135.

(2) *Colonial Empire and Ratio to Home Population.*

State.	Area in Square Miles.	Estimated Population.	Number of Home Inhabitants per Square Mile.	Number of Square Miles to 1,000 Home Inhabitants.
United Kingdom ... ..	13,032,200	388,408,000	3.5	287
France* ... ..	4,539,000	40,986,000	8.7	115
Germany† ... ..	1,032,000	11,692,000	62.9	16
Denmark ... ..	86,600	127,000	3.2	31
Holland ... ..	735,000	48,000,000	8.6	116
Portugal ... ..	802,950	9,145,000	7.4	135
Belgium ... ..	909,700	15,000,000	8.2	123

\* Including Sahara, 1,500,000 square miles, and excluding Morocco, 219,000 square miles.

† Including Congo territory ceded by France in 1911.

Let it be remembered also that this disparity is steadily increasing to Germany's disadvantage. Before the war France, with only three-fifths of Germany's population, with little more than half her density of population, and a birth-rate which barely counterbalanced a too excessive death-rate, had a colonial empire seven times larger in area and three times larger in population than that of her eastern neighbour. Great as this disproportion was before the war, it will be still more marked in future. For Germany it will be a compara-

tively easy matter to make good the loss of life which she has suffered during the last three years, terrible though it will be. Placing the loss at a million and a half men, it represents, on the pre-war rate of increase, less than two years' excess of births over deaths, though owing to the sacrifice of so large a part of the nation's virile manhood the time taken to restore the full wastage of war will be far longer.

For France, however, in the absence of a quite unexpected increase in her rate of natality, which for many years has left her population almost stationary, it is to be feared that her loss of man-power owing to the war will be irreparable and permanent. The following figures, showing the natural growth of population in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom during the years 1910 to 1913 put the matter in a tangible form :

Year.	Germany.	France.	United Kingdom.
1910	897,100	71,400	492,600
1911	739,900	- 34,900	432,700
1912	839,900	57,900	465,000
1913	833,800	41,900	445,300

The truth is that France has never had a surplus population wherewith to colonize ; she has not population sufficient for her own needs at home ; strictly speaking, France does not colonize at all, but only governs her oversea dominions in the old Roman way. Germany has had such a surplus population in the past and will have it again, and after a time in an increasing degree. It is a significant fact that while since 1871 the density of population has increased in France from 174 to only 189 inhabitants to the square mile, it has increased in Germany from 110 to 310.

Judging by the movement of Germany's population during recent years, it might seem that the rate of natural

growth has passed its maximum. Since 1904, when the excess of births over deaths was still a million a year, there has been a gradual fall to a little over 800,000, and some *doctrinaire* English writers have in consequence argued that the German need of colonies, if it ever existed at all, now exists no longer. If this crude argument had any value, it is obvious that it would apply to France far more than to Germany. It is, however, too soon to draw any definite conclusions from tendencies which have not yet been shown to be permanent. If the birth-rate of Germany, as of most European countries, is at present falling, so also is the death-rate, and it is at least possible that the increasing efforts to stimulate the one and to check the other—in the latter case particularly by the greater care of infant life from the pre-natal period forward—may restore the old rate of increase and maintain it for a long time.

The increasing development of Germany on industrial lines will further strengthen the demand for outlets. Such a development is not to the mind of the agrarians, whose efforts have for over a generation been concentrated upon an endeavour to prevent Germany from ceasing to be an agricultural State. The same aim will be followed in the future with the old perseverance, but without any hope of further success. However the great landowners of Prussia, Mecklenburg, and other States may try, it will be impossible to apply the agrarian brake to their country's industrial progress in future. If Germany is to recuperate, and eventually to retrieve her old prosperity, as she assuredly will do, and in a far shorter time than most advocates of economic boycotts and similar retaliatory devices appear to think, it will be by the multiplication and intensified development of all her sources of wealth.

We must be prepared, therefore, for a great stimulus to production and manufacture in every direction. For a long time the neglected needs of her own population and that of her allies will keep her mines and forges and factories busily employed, but in the end there

will be increased pressure in foreign markets, and once again British traders must be prepared for painful surprises. Then, if not quieted beforehand, the old cry for a foothold in territories which would serve at once as markets for German merchandise and as sources of raw materials for industrial use, like vegetable oils and cotton, would be raised with greater urgency than ever before. As to the latter of these purposes, it is perhaps not generally known how entirely dependent Germany is upon the tropical colonies of Great Britain, France, and Belgium for such articles as palm kernels, rape seed, cotton seed, earth-nuts, copra, and linseed, in spite of all her efforts to increase the supplies from her own colonies.

But the future needs of population and trade are not the only, and for many Germans not the strongest, argument for colonies. Behind the colonial movement is a strong and sincere desire that Germany shall cease to be dependent in an ever-increasing degree upon other countries for house-room for her emigrant population. It is no answer to this argument to say that the colonies of other countries are open to Germans so long as they are willing to go to them and will behave themselves. The objection to this view of the matter is fairly and temperately stated in a work by the German author Carl Jentsch, entitled "The Future of the German Nation" ("Die Zukunft des deutschen Volkes"), and published some years before the war. After frankly admitting the great boon to Germany of the ready welcome given in the past to her emigrants by Australia, the Cape, and Canada, countries "which soon become a dear home to every German, Italian, and Slav who settles therein," he pleads, nevertheless, for a piece of earth to which Germany can send her sons and daughters with the knowledge that they will be able to remain German instead of becoming the subjects of foreign States, where their wealth will be part of Germany's wealth, and their national spirit, traditions, and customs be fostered in an atmosphere entirely favourable. The genuineness and purity of any man's patriotism may

be measured by his readiness to respect patriotism in other nations ; and those will most appreciate this German attachment to national individuality, as a trait both natural and altogether laudable, who are most conscious of it themselves. No people in the world should be readier to sympathize with it than the British, so richly blessed alike in the extent, variety of climate, and resources of the territories which have fallen beneath their sway.

It would be a great mistake to belittle German national sentiment on the colonial movement. I have followed this movement closely since its beginnings early in the 'eighties. Germany's colonial empire may be said to have been built up, if not in a day, at least almost in a single year, for all her large protectorates were acquired between the summer of 1884 and the later months of 1885. I was an eye-witness of the jubilation which greeted at that time the founding of what was regarded as a Greater Germany across the seas, and its many exuberant public manifestations—some fantastic and extravagant, though excusable in a young nation—were to me a singular revelation of the sentimental side of the German character, as it existed in those days. Since then the colonial movement has passed through many phases. A time of enthusiasm and inordinate expectations was soon succeeded by one of depression, when it was seen that all that glittered was not gold, and the brilliant results which it was unreasonably hoped would fall like ripe fruit from a prolific tree failed to appear at once. Bad administration, due partly to inexperience and the want of clear ideas as to what colonization meant and implied, but also to the despatch to the protectorates of inefficient, unsuitable, and often evil-living men, brought reproach and discredit upon a venture which had been entered upon with high hopes and good intentions. Short-sightedness, stupidity, and cruelty combined fostered disaffection amongst the native populations, and this led in some of the colonies to a succession of big and little wars, in which stern punishment was meted



to the natives with no sense of proportion. In South-West Africa the climax of a long series of punitive expeditions was the war of extermination waged against the Hereros from 1904 forward, a huge blunder from which that colony is still suffering.

With the reorganization of the colonial service and the cleansing of the administration, a humaner spirit has entered into the relationships between the officials and the native populations. Much has also been done for the development of the natural resources of the African colonies by the building of railways and other measures. In these ways, and by the training of the natives to regular habits of industry, by the establishment of experimental farms, schools, hospitals, and the introduction of improved sanitation, etc., the material and moral welfare of the subject populations has been promoted, and the colonies, though with several exceptions not yet financially independent, were before the war on the way to that desirable condition.

Above all, the colonial movement has been re-established in national esteem and confidence. One by one the parties which originally either opposed it or held towards it an attitude of suspicion and indifference have come into line upon the main principle, that colonies are indispensable to Germany's future, as an outlet for population, as a source of raw materials, and a market for the product of her ever-expanding industries. The Radicals, who twenty years ago were ready to sell the colonies to the highest or any bidder, would not now part with them for money or love; even the Socialists no longer scoff at colonial policy as something artificial and irrational, and in the present war are as warmly opposed to the cession of Togo or the "German East" as to that of Alsace-Lorraine. There is no longer in the colonial movement any trace of the old almost childlike credulity, but its place has been taken by a disposition to treat the colonies seriously and on the whole by a greater readiness to recognize the moral obligations which empire carries with it. Thirty years ago the Germans played with their colonies

as with toys ; to-day their attitude towards them is that of sober men.

To offer Germany in place of her African colonies some equivalent elsewhere would be little likely to appease her, for nations, like individuals, most value the things for which they have made the greatest sacrifices. These colonies have cost the mother country dearly both in treasure and in life, for each one has proved a veritable graveyard of soldiers, officials, and traders. Hence the nation's instincts of piety and gratitude are bound up, in a large degree, with these territories, whose history forms a considerable part of the history of the new Empire. It would be a grave political blunder to wound unduly the feelings of a whole nation in a matter which for it is thus one of honour, reputation, and pride.

Let me repeat that it is to the interest of the British Empire in particular that Germany should be given all reasonable scope for colonial expansion, both now and in the future, because in endeavouring to limit her needlessly we increase the difficulties of our own position abroad. The law of territorial constriction is one with that of physical constriction in general, and it was once formulated by Count Beust, the Austrian Foreign Minister, *apropos* of the attempt to bind Russia by the Pontus clauses of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, in the words, "Toute compression excessive a pour effet de provoquer l'expansion dans une autre direction."<sup>1</sup> Let us try to confine Germany to Europe as we did thirty years ago to our lasting harm, and we should increase Germany's pressure upon her neighbours, keep alive and accentuate her old restlessness, and justify again the accusation of selfishness made by Bismarck in 1885 against Great Britain as a country which was not satisfied with owning so large a part of the earth's surface, but grudged other nations a share in her leavings. Conversely, by assisting Germany to realize all reasonable imperialistic aspirations we should by so much relieve pressure at home, and so promote the

<sup>1</sup> Dispatch of January 1, 1867.

harmony and tranquillity of Europe in the new order of things to be created.

No measure that perversity could suggest would be more effective in stirring up future mischief between Great Britain and the German Empire than to use the opportunity which our present superiority of naval strength places within our reach for excluding that country permanently from the colonies upon whose development it has expended so much hitherto unrequited effort and sacrifice. A statesmanship worth the name will always look ahead, and the conditions and problems which the peace settlement should anticipate, in so far as foresight is possible, are those of a century hence, when Germany will have reached manhood, a nation not of seventy but of a hundred and fifty millions, and Great Britain will be the ageing mother of a vigorous brood who long ago will have been left to make their own way in the world. That way will be easier and safer the more it is paved with enduring friendships instead of enmities.

The question whether Germany shall have her colonies back or not upon conditions is essentially one between that country and our own, and we, and not the Allies, shall have to bear the sole responsibility—not formally, it may be, but in reality—for whatever decision is arrived at. For Russia Germany's imperialistic ambitions—the Berlin-Bagdad chimera once dispelled—hardly matter in the least. The two empires have never had any point of contact out of Europe in the past, and only one such point is conceivable in the future. Italy will never fall out with Germany over colonial questions. Japan may wish to retain Kiauchow by arrangement with China, and if she insists on it her allies will have to agree. But Japan will be quite able to look after herself, so long as her activities are confined to the sphere which race and geographical conditions might seem to have assigned to her. Even France, with her already huge colonial empire, and her stationary population, has no legitimate reason for wishing to cripple the efforts of a nation which before

the war was increasing at the rate of over 800,000 a year. She may, indeed, hanker to regain the Congo territory which she ceded to Germany in 1911, but its retrocession would upset the Morocco settlement, and pave the way for future complications which might not again be adjusted to her advantage. Certainly France will never quarrel with Germany on colonial questions unless backed up by an ally at least as strong as herself, and that ally could only be Great Britain.

In whatever direction we look, therefore, we find no Continental Power which has a vital interest in thwarting Germany's colonial aspirations, and only one upon whose co-operation Great Britain would be able to rely in an undertaking of such doubtful wisdom. Why should we take upon ourselves so great and needless a responsibility? Already the resources of the Empire, material as well as military, will be sufficiently strained by the immense liabilities which we shall have to share with the Allies, without wantonly incurring others of which no one would be able to determine either the extent, the precise purpose, or the outcome.

Let us weigh well the fact that if, justifying herself by the fact of possession, and relying upon her existing invulnerable naval power, Great Britain should refuse to return to Germany any of her captured colonies on any terms whatever, the day will come when we shall have to fight for the possession of these territories and perhaps much else. We might have allies in that struggle or we might not, for alliances are proverbially unstable, but it would be unsafe to count upon them. The British democracy, which can never be made to fight against its will, might once more rally to the cause of empire with the noble fidelity which marks it to-day in a struggle in which empire is only one amongst other issues. But, as Russia is reminding us at the present time, democracies do not love foreign adventures, and they will love them less than ever in the future. Even assuming, however, that the Empire again stood together as one man, the risks and sacrifices that would be involved in a conflict of the kind are utterly out of

proportion to the advantage, if it be one at all, of making an inappreciable addition to our vast dominions.

It would be premature to suggest exactly which of Germany's former territories should be restored to her, and on what conditions, and which remain in other hands, but the necessary adjustments should be made a subject of negotiation, and the idea of exchanges and compensation should be kept steadily in view. In such exchanges it would probably be found expedient to invite France, Belgium, and Portugal to co-operate, if thereby a larger and more comprehensive agreement could be facilitated. In determining the lines of adjustment the special circumstances of all countries would need to be borne in mind. In Germany consolidation has long been the watchword of the colonial party. "The history of our colonies in the present world-war," said the Colonial Secretary, Dr. Solf, some time ago, "has shown us what the German colonial empire has hitherto lacked. It has shown that it was no real 'empire' at all, but only a number of possessions without geographical or political cohesion or communication one with another. This experience points to the direction of our future aims." The principle of consolidation, therefore, may well afford a starting-point from which a settlement, tolerable if not satisfactory to both sides, might be arrived at. Whether in the case of the colonies returned Germany should in every case be required to refund the whole costs of the military expeditions undertaken by the Dominions, the mother country, and the Allies, is a fair question for discussion. Such a demand appears reasonable, and compliance with it would make it easier to meet German views.

It must be added, however, that even if we endeavoured to meet Germany's interests generously in Africa and elsewhere her land-hunger would still not be wholly satisfied. Quite as great as her need of tropical colonies, suitable only for plantation enterprises, as sources of raw materials and foodstuffs, is the need of territory in a temperate zone suitable for permanent settlement by whites. One such spot may be found

in the Middle East—a point considered in the preceding chapter—but unquestionably the choicest field for European emigration yet waiting for development lies in South America. For many years German emigrants have settled in large numbers in Brazil, though they would appear to have long ago outlived their welcome there. Such disfavour as they already suffered, however, has been increased immeasurably by the action of their Government in the war, the effect of which has been to change the attitude of Brazil from one of neutrality into one of active hostility. But even had not the Brazil Government ceased to be friendly to the presence of large enclaves of Germans in that country, the hope of Germany setting up a political sovereignty there or elsewhere in South America is for the present barred by the Monroe doctrine, so long as the Government and people of the United States insist upon a rigid interpretation of that hoary formula.

Perhaps this is as far as the question of German colonization can be followed with advantage at the present time. It is with our own direct relationships with Germany, as the present occupants and custodians of most of her lost territories, that this chapter is particularly concerned. It was a political maxim of that wise statesman, Lord Clarendon, that if it is desirable to do a thing at all it is sound common sense to do it gracefully. It is of immense importance that public opinion should not be allowed to drift until, owing to failure to probe and weigh the question from all sides, the nation and its Government commit themselves hastily and unwarily to an untenable attitude from which they might not be able to recede without loss of credit. Nothing is easier or more natural than to assume as a matter of course that in no form and on no conditions whatever can Germany's colonies, or any of them, be returned to her. To arrive at that conclusion needs no thought, no foresight, no insight, no imagination. To know what, on a long view of the question, it is wise and just and safe to do is quite another matter. The ablest of our statesmen will only be able enough to grapple with this problem,

and meanwhile all loose talk makes their task more difficult.

To withhold colonies from Germany, great as our resentment against her may be, would be a petty act of retaliation which might be pregnant with large and disastrous results. It would be to tell her that henceforth she cannot be allowed to colonize except by permission of Great Britain. That would be a declaration of war against the German nation and its national aspirations. Are we prepared to face the consequences, and is the gain to be derived from such an attitude worth the risk? On the other hand, a policy of moderation and conciliation upon this question would justify itself abundantly: the history of the relationships of the British race to other nations has proved this a hundred times in the past, and will prove it a hundred times in the future. There is no reason in the world why, in addition to the hostility and resentment of the enemy nations which we shall share in common with our Allies over the general issues of the war, we should go out of our way to earn an extra portion on our own account over the colonial question. Whether they like it or not, Great Britain and Germany will again be neighbours in the future, and our action at the end of the war will decide whether they shall be tolerably good neighbours or intolerably bad ones. If on the colonial question we meet Germany in a conciliatory spirit, and do it handsomely, as only a strong, dignified, and generous nation can, we shall do more to counteract and discredit the malarious propagandism of Pan-Germanism than all the criminations and recriminations in the world, and we may perhaps succeed in dislodging from the German mind generally—it would be well worth our while—that disposition to regard the British Empire as a proper object of envy and covetousness which has done so much to poison the political life of Germany and divert the nation's attention from sober and legitimate imperialistic enterprises.

At the same time Germany should not be allowed to re-enter into possession of any part of her colonial

heritage except under certain conditions. One danger in particular must be guarded against. Care must be taken that the native populations shall not suffer because of actual or suspected faithlessness to their former masters during the war. To compensate Germany in different territories, to give her new colonies for old, were it practicable, would of course be the surest way of making such reprisals impossible, but in so far as this cannot be done we must exact guarantees and adopt safeguards as effective as they can be made against any such reprisals. One of the best safeguards possible would be to make the return to Germany of any of her colonies dependent upon the abandonment of her present system of government, and its replacement by a parliamentary *régime*, under which the Imperial Diet would control, and bear responsibility for the rule of, the subject races. Only when Germany has been modernized, by throwing off the last traces of political mediævalism, will the democracies of the New World as of the Old have any real satisfaction in welcoming her as a comrade and a partner in the mission of civilization.

There is also a genuine danger that Germany may in the future regard her colonies as mere recruiting grounds for soldiers, with a view less perhaps to warfare in tropical regions than to the creation of reserves of troops for use against her enemies in Europe in future campaigns. The value of native troops in struggles between white nations is one of the lessons of the war which both Great Britain and France have been at pains to bring home to the minds of the German military authorities. It is obvious that this is a form of warfare in which all colonial Powers will be able to engage according to their resources of native man-power, and the prospect of its being developed on a larger and more systematic scale in the future than in the past is one that suggests grave reflections from the standpoint of political expediency and still more from that of civilization and morality. It is deplorable enough that civilized nations should still know no better way of showing their superiority to the untutored savage than by hacking each



other to pieces. The idea of training native populations for extensive and systematic participation in future wars, over questions in which they have no interest and which they cannot by any possibility understand, is so abhorrent in itself, and so incompatible with any moral or rational conception of colonization, that it should be regarded as one of the first and most important duties of the International Congress, whose duty it will be to lay the foundations of the world's future peace, to assert the principle that in wars between white nations their colonies shall not be implicated, either directly by becoming themselves arenas of hostile operations, or indirectly by supplying levies of fighting men to serve as food for cannon elsewhere.

The Congo Act of February 26, 1885, provides a precedent for such action, for it embodies a provision the observance of which might have kept large territories and populations of the African continent out of the present war. The provision is that of cap. iii., art. 11, which runs :

In the event of a Power which exercises rights of sovereignty or protection in the territories named in Article I (i.e. the territories forming the basin of the Congo and its tributaries, the Lake territory as defined, and the territory extending east from the Congo basin to the Indian Ocean and south to the mouth of the Zambesi, etc.) as being placed under the system of free trade being involved in war, the high signatories to the present Act, as well as those which may adhere to it, undertake to lend their good services with a view to the territories belonging to such Power and included in the conventional free trade zone being, in agreement with the said Power and the other belligerent party or parties, placed under the laws of neutrality and regarded during the war as though they did not belong to a belligerent State. The belligerent parties would be required from that time not to carry on hostilities in the neutralized territories or to use these as a base for warlike operations.

It would be a gain for civilization if this provision were made the basis of a larger and more definite agree-

ment, applying to all States in respect of the indigenes of all their colonial possessions, and if in addition the free trade zone defined by that Act were extended so as to include the whole of tropical Africa, from coast to coast. Above all, it would be necessary to insist that the pledge of neutrality should bind belligerent States not to carry on intrigue and foment mischief in the adjacent territories of their enemies.

## CHAPTER X

### MEASURES OF REPARATION

"Necessity knows no law. Our troops have invaded Luxemburg, and perhaps are already on Belgian soil. Gentlemen, that is contrary to the dictates of international law. . . . The wrong—I speak openly—that we are committing we will endeavour to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached. Anybody who is threatened as we are threatened, and is fighting for his highest possessions, can only have one thought—how he is to hack his way through."—*Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, German Imperial Chancellor, in the Imperial Diet, August 4, 1914.*

"The disasters caused by the German declaration of war and the innumerable outrages committed by Germany and her Allies against both belligerents and neutrals demand penalties, reparation, and guarantees. . . . Belgium before the war asked for nothing but to live in harmony with all her neighbours. Her King and her Government have but one aim—the re-establishment of peace and justice. But they only desire a peace which would assure to their country legitimate reparation, guarantees, and safeguards for the future."—*Reply of the Allied Governments to the German Peace Note, January, 1917.*

"Of what avail, in such a cause, are mere words and promises, the multiplication of parchments and protocols, which can be torn to pieces in far less time than it took to write them down? Reparation, restitution—there is something tangible in them, even though so much has been destroyed that can never be replaced, and so much has vanished that cannot be recalled."—*Mr. Asquith, speech at Ladybank, February 1, 1917.*

THE territorial aspects of the peace settlement having been surveyed, there remains still the question of pecuniary reparation. Of those who are most strongly convinced of the impracticability of dismembering Germany and Austria-Hungary, and of the unwisdom of either attempting such an enterprise or avowing it as a serious aim, probably few would be prepared to endorse the attitude of the logical pacifist, who equally opposes the idea of exacting material indemnities. Reparation is not revenge, however, and no terms of peace within the power of the Allies to impose would be tolerable which did not at least make provision for ample pecuniary

recompense by Germany to Belgium and France, and by Austria-Hungary to Serbia and Montenegro, for the invasion of their territories and the resulting destruction of life and property.

The words of the German Imperial Chancellor which are quoted at the head of this chapter—words embodying sentiments than which more egoistical and immoral were never, perhaps, avowed by any statesman known to history, for the entire argument amounts to a plea that the interests of his country come before legality, and justify deliberate wrongdoing—should warrant the belief that Germany is already prepared to meet Belgium's claims. The claims of France, however, will have to be pressed with equal force. In the case of both countries the bill would cover claims for all coal, iron ore, and other minerals extracted from the ground or otherwise appropriated; for all industrial plant, of whatever kind, destroyed, injured, or removed; for all other property destroyed or damaged, whether in the form of military works, railways, bridges, roads, or buildings, both public and private; for crops appropriated or wantonly ruined; for all booty carried out of the country; for all tributes and fines exacted from communities or individuals; for all stores seized and not paid for; and so forth. Above all, there should be liberal recompense to Belgium, in so far as money can avail, for the lives which have been sacrificed in her heroic endeavour to repel unprovoked aggression; for the murders and outrages committed upon Belgian citizens throughout the war; for the men disabled or otherwise broken by wounds, disease, and privation in general; as well as for survivors and dependents deprived of parents or protectors owing to acts of the invaders. In the case of both countries there should be compensation for the brutal deportations of innocent civilians and the nameless sufferings which these victims of military despotism have undergone whilst in captivity. If beyond such compensation for physical loss there was ever a strong case for "moral and intellectual damage"—a form of injury recognized by German law—both to the nation and in-

dividuals, the case of Belgium is one, and in any event the indemnity to that afflicted country should be so large as to cover every conceivable contingency.

The reparation to Serbia and Montenegro would, *mutatis mutandis*, follow the same lines. If the invading nations wished to pay part of their penalty in the form of material and labour for rebuilding the destroyed towns and villages, the railways and roads, and the like, there could be no objection. When full atonement has been made in this way to Belgium, France, and Serbia, it is probable that little more will be obtainable either from Germany or Austria-Hungary in the way of money. Russia's case for reparation is also strong, though perhaps not as strong as that of the three countries named. However justifiably, she at least was the first Power to order a general mobilization, and while the destruction done by Germany upon her territory must run into a fabulous value, the marks left by her armies in East Prussia will not soon be effaced.

The Allies, if able to dictate the terms of peace, will do well to be satisfied with what can be exacted from the enemy countries within a short period, instead of counting on huge indemnities, the payment of which would inevitably be long-drawn-out and perhaps for that reason insecure. Water cannot be squeezed out of flint, nor gold extracted from empty purses. Moreover, the costs of the war on all sides have been so enormous, and the hope of recovering even any considerable proportion of these costs seems so remote, that the question of indemnities almost becomes a negligible one. Great Britain in particular, having entered the struggle on behalf of Belgium, would worthily crown her great sacrifice if, in the event of a victorious issue of the war, she renounced all thought of recompense for herself and directed her influence towards securing for that gallant country the fullest reparation within the power of money to give, so helping the Belgian nation to make a new start under the most favourable conditions possible. It would be well if the Allies let the enemy countries know at the outset that their demands would be the more

moderate in proportion as they undertook to bring about a genuine reduction in their expenditure upon armaments.

It should be the business of an International Commission, containing representatives of neutral Governments, to determine the exact amount of the indemnities after the Allied and enemy nations had stated their respective cases, though it might also be a good arrangement to entrust the matter to a court of American jurists and experts. Nevertheless, an International Commission, if later enlarged for executive purposes by the addition of representatives of the belligerent Powers, might play an important part in all the indemnity arrangements.

It is impossible to say what will be the financial position of Germany as a going concern after the war, for we cannot even say that of our own country; all that is known of the money-raising methods of her successive Ministers of Finance, however, justifies the belief that it will be desperate. Only at a late stage in the war was special taxation levied towards meeting the ever-accumulating burden of expenditure, and even then such taxation was imposed in a half-hearted way, and on a very inadequate scale, while meantime the nation was urged to convert all its assets, of whatever form, into paper securities representing loans to the fatherland. There was, of course, a good reason for the German Government's reluctance to face the financial question early and boldly—the difficulty of raising any very large amount without resorting to a tax on income, which is already liable to two taxes, for State (as opposed to Imperial) and municipal purposes respectively; but the effect of handing forward almost the whole of the war liabilities will severely handicap the Imperial Treasury and the nation when they come to take stock of the actual position, and face the work of reconstruction and recuperation at home. It will be but common prudence to take this fact into consideration, and in demanding indemnities not to endeavour to strain the bow beyond reason.

How, in the circumstances, should such indemnities

be secured? What is said on this subject of Germany will apply to Austria-Hungary as well. It may be, of course, that the German Government would duly honour its bond, but the fact has to be faced that it has not honoured many bonds of late, and having in mind the possibility that the treaty-breakers of 1914 might still be in power, it would be well to act in the spirit of the well-known German proverb, "Sure is sure." Belgium must not again be put off with mere "scraps of paper." Moreover, both Belgium and France will want as much ready money as possible, and of that commodity there will be little available in Germany after the war.

Both security and credit, within certain limits, might be provided by existing tangible assets. Some of the writers who have ingeniously speculated upon Germany's financial capabilities are evidently unaware that she owns a very considerable public estate. I refer to the enormous value embodied in State undertakings, not only railways and canals, but coal, iron, and potash mines, smelting works, and industrial undertakings of other kinds, vast forests and domains, to which may be added the Posts, Telegraphs, and Telephones. It is obvious that as the liability of the Empire and the federal States is one and integral, it would be legitimate to pool their properties in satisfaction of their creditors' claims. The whole of this fiscal estate, therefore, should be part of Germany's indemnity to Belgium and France. This estate should be valued, capitalized somewhat below the ascertained value, say, up to an average proportion of 90 or 95 per cent., and the aggregate amount so represented be converted into negotiable bonds—bearing interest of perhaps 5 or 6 per cent.—which should be handed over to the two countries in proportion to their agreed claims, or to Belgium only, if France could afford to wait. The German Government should be required to redeem these bonds at par in blocks at stated intervals, meanwhile paying the fixed rate of interest, but it would have the option of anticipating the date of redemption by agreement with the International Commission. Meantime, it would be possible for the creditor Governments

to realize their holdings, or any part of them, with the sanction of the Commission, Germany having a right of pre-emption at par, but, in the event of her declining to exercise it, being responsible for any difference between the face value of the bonds and their market value as ascertained by the Commission.

Only a rough guess can be made of the present value of the public estate of Germany as thus defined, but an estimate may be formed on the basis of its profit-making capacity. According to the estimates for 1913, the Empire counted on a net revenue of £9,339,000 from remunerative undertakings of all kinds, and the revenue similarly derived by the various States in addition £53,510,000. The revenue from the State railways alone was represented in these totals by £1,570,000 for the Empire (in respect of the railways in Alsace-Lorraine<sup>1</sup>) and £39,100,000 for the Federal States, before deduction of interest on loans. To capitalize some £63,000,000 at 5 per cent. would give at once the handsome sum of over £1,200,000,000, or six times the amount of the French indemnity in 1871. If to the foregoing be added the value of the canal properties of the Empire (the Kiel Canal) and the various States, the total would be greatly increased, though to what extent cannot be said. Any indemnity in excess of the total so arrived at might have to be secured by a mortgage upon the customs revenue of the Empire, which before the war amounted to some £40,000,000 a year.

Here a greatly needed word of warning seems necessary. Much has been said and written about the guarantees which are to be required of Germany. The less we talk of and invoke the aid of guarantees the better. It is not suggested that such guarantees as may be practicable for the observance of her undertakings should not be called for, for they must and

<sup>1</sup> The railways in Alsace-Lorraine are all the property of the Empire, which bought the old French lines from their private owners at the time of the annexation, and has made many additions since. If Alsace-Lorraine or any part of it were returned to France, the Empire would be entitled to credit for the value of all lines in the ceded territory, the amount thus represented being set against the indemnity payable to France.



will be. Nevertheless, peace conditions which rely for their operation as little as possible upon outside pressure and are so devised as to give to the enemy nations the smallest possible chance of or inducement for evasion, will have a far better chance of being faithfully observed than those which are hinged about by humiliating conditions. For that reason, if not on grounds of impracticability, it would be wise in all discussions of this question to abstain from suggestions of armed occupation. Germany could not be effectively occupied and held down by any armies within the power of the Allies to raise; if the war has not taught us that, it has taught us nothing. Normally the strongest guarantees would be moral guarantees, and these might be sufficient if only Germany were under parliamentary government, and the conscience and will of the nation at large supplanted the fickle and elastic faith of autocratic Sovereigns and an unprincipled and brutalized military caste, to whom pledges and promises are only binding so long as they do not conflict with interest. Moreover, the Allies' overwhelming superiority in sea-power, with their control of nearly all the great supplies of raw materials for industries and of the coaling stations, places in their hands a formidable weapon, which could be used at any moment with great effect.

Perhaps the surest way of protecting the countries to be indemnified from any danger of default or defalcation would be to internationalize Germany's indebtedness as far as possible, and to let the indemnity transaction from first to last be one between her and the International Commission already proposed, which should throughout act as trustees on behalf of the creditor countries. Thus the whole of Germany's fiscal property, as above specified, should be vested in this Commission, which should hold it on behalf of Belgium and France like trustees for the debenture-holders of a public company, and receive the accruing interest for distribution to these countries. The German Imperial Government would accordingly be left to make its own arrangements with the federal States, since with these the Commission could have no direct dealings.

In the ordinary way any balance of the indemnities not covered by tangible assets would be left as a debt to be paid off in instalments at stated intervals. This method, it will be remembered, was followed in the case of the French indemnity of 1871. The Treaty of Frankfort stipulated that the indemnity, in amount five milliards of francs or about two hundred million pounds, should be paid in amounts spread over three years, a German army of occupation remaining in the country until the last instalment had been safely banked in Berlin. The continued presence upon her soil of alien troops proved so galling to France, however, that she insisted upon a modification of the terms of the agreement, as a result of which she was able to pay out the enemy six months before the stipulated date.<sup>1</sup>

It would be well to assume that the plan of paying a humiliating debt piecemeal and direct would prove no less disagreeable to Germany, and if other arrangements are practicable there is every reason why they should be adopted. The method by which the balance of the indemnity exacted from France by the Allies of 1815 was met may offer a useful suggestion. This indemnity was six hundred millions of francs, or fifty-two million pounds, but in October, 1818, when the instalments paid on account had reduced it to 265,000,000 francs (£10,600,000), the balance was taken over by several banking houses, which agreed, as to the major portion, to meet nine bills to the corresponding amount issued to the French Government at intervals of a month, while the remainder was converted into stock and accepted by the same banks. In the payment of the French indemnity of 1871 bills likewise played a prominent part; for while it was stipulated that the instalments should be paid in German coin or bullion, English, Prussian, Dutch, or Belgian banknotes and first-class commercial bills were accepted in provisional payment, such paper payments, however, ranking only after realization at the cost of the French Government, and

<sup>1</sup> The first instalment was paid on June 1, 1871; the last instalment was due on March 2, 1874, but was paid on September 5, 1873.

to the amount of their value in German currency. From first to last the larger part of the indemnity was paid in the form of bills which were purchased abroad by the French Government or by bankers acting on its behalf in the open market.<sup>1</sup>

Having in view the desirability of making the arrangements for the payment of the indemnity a single comprehensive transaction, it is suggested that the German Government should be required to give at once to the International Commission, acting on behalf of the creditor Governments, bills for the entire balance due beyond the amount represented by the fiscal estate above indicated. These bills would be dated according to arrangement, and would be taken up by the German banks and foreign banks willing to join in the *consortium* which would probably be formed to negotiate the necessary credit. The bills would be converted into stock and put upon the market in blocks of corresponding amounts at dates and on conditions to be arranged earlier between the banks, the German Government, and the International Commission.

The same methods would, of course, apply in the case of Austria-Hungary, the International Commission performing exactly similar functions in relation to that country in its dealings with Serbia and Montenegro. The negotiation in the international money market of the indemnity loans of both countries would promote the rehabilitation of credit all round, and enable the debtor countries to meet their obligations with a minimum amount of disturbance to commercial relationships. The advocates of retaliation will be aghast at the idea of doing anything that could assist in reviving the financial credit of the countries with which we are at war. If they would try to emancipate themselves from the retaliatory order of ideas, they would perceive that it will be hopeless to extract large indemnities from

<sup>1</sup> "The Franco-German War Indemnity and its Economic Results" (p. 2), by H. H. O'Farrell, a timely and useful publication of the Garton Foundation. Mr. O'Farrell has courteously read this chapter, and I have profited by his valuable criticisms.

Germany and Austria-Hungary while at the same time doing our best to impoverish these countries. Our responsibility to Belgium, therefore, apart from a proper regard for our own interests as a commercial nation, points to the unwisdom of any such short-sighted policy. It may be justifiable to suppose that the German loan bonds would nowhere find a more popular market than amongst those wealthy German-Americans of the United States who have shown so unexpected a capacity for a double allegiance.

If some such arrangements as these were made, the idea of quartering upon Germany and Austria-Hungary armies of occupation to enforce the payment of the indemnities, which has such a fascination for many minds, would have no purpose. Apart from any considerations of honour, these countries would have every possible inducement to fulfil their engagements punctually, for the Governments associated in the International Commission would, for the time being, control their financial credit, and would be able in many ways to facilitate or retard their economic revival according to circumstances. Not only so, but the large amount of capital invested by subjects of the debtor States in industrial and commercial enterprises of all kinds in the territories represented by the Commission would be a substantial pledge of straightforward dealing. In a word, the broader the basis upon which the arrangements for the payment of the indemnities can be placed, and in particular the more neutral nations can be induced to come into them, the greater will be both the moral and the material security for their faithful observance. Assuming that the indemnity, in the case of Germany and Austria-Hungary alike, would prove a great drain upon resources already highly mortgaged, it might be prudent to give to either of these countries the right to ask, after a specified interval, for the reconsideration of the dates fixed for the payment of the remaining instalments. It would be an impolitic proceeding to try to extract from the debtor countries sums which they were demonstrably unable to pay. In

considering every aspect of the indemnity question it cannot be too clearly understood that anything that the Allies could do to facilitate the discharge by the enemy countries of their liabilities would serve the interests of the creditor countries in an equal degree and be to the benefit of the nations generally. Nevertheless, no such leniency should be shown unless the Central Powers had substantially reduced their expenditure upon armaments, and were able to prove that such reduction implied a real diminution of their fighting material.

A cognate question which perhaps still more exercises the minds of the more thoughtful and moderate section of the community, and whose appeal to them is distinctly a moral appeal, is whether measures should not be adopted to ensure meet punishment to the authors of the many outrages which have been committed in Germany's name during the war in breach of the laws of warfare and the spirit of humanity. Public opinion throughout the world would unquestionably support the Allies in such a step. The plea of warlike necessities has in the past excused much brutality and cruelty, but in civilized times it has never before been invoked in justification of such enormities as those which have lately sullied German arms and cast a reproach upon the nation in whose name they have been committed. It is not necessary to attempt any complete enumeration of these acts, and probably the full list will never be known, but among those which have most shocked the world at large are the sinking of the *Lusitania*, the repeated torpedoing of hospital ships, the cold-blooded murders of Nurse Cavell and Captain Fryatt, and many other unarmed civilian victims; the bloody *régime* of the dastard Bissing, now gone to his account; the deportations of civilians from both Belgium and France, and other crimes like to them in calculated brutality.

It may fairly be conceded that the men who actually committed these crimes cannot be held primarily responsible, any more than the troops who have been bidden to use fire flames and poisonous gases, to poison wells, and devastate whole regions of the invaded

countries before deserting them. We know, in fact, from intercepted letters and the statements of these men, made both to French civilians while they were still combatants or to our own soldiers as prisoners, that many of them have abhorred the devilish work which has been imposed upon them. In war, however, soldiers cannot be choosers, least of all under a military system based, like that of Germany, upon an iron discipline of which the whole purpose is to create a spirit of blind obedience and make men into machines: "theirs not to reason why, theirs not to make reply, theirs but to do or die." Who doubts, in fact, that the alternatives for these, perhaps often unwilling, accomplices in crime were either to murder or be murdered instead by due process of martial law?

It is, therefore, with the principals—the men in high places—that we are concerned, and the wish is natural and insistent that these men should be paid back in their own coin. Let us remember, however, that whatever reparation may be practicable will be the more certain if the question is approached in a strictly judicial spirit and with a view to the adoption of judicial methods. The first impulse of the natural man is to say, "These men should all be shot." So, perhaps, they should, if mere shooting were not too kind a punishment for them; but to bid Germany, if we were in a position to do so, to hand over to the Allies the whole batch of culprits, in order that they might receive such punishment as might seem their due, would not be a very rational proceeding or one likely to produce the desired result. It may be true that no penalties which the Allies could by any possibility award to these criminals could exceed the barest justice, yet it would not be consonant with Western ideas of equity that the aggrieved nations should be the sole judges of their own case, for that were to weight the scales of justice. Moreover, these crimes have been committed against humanity at large, whose conscience they have outraged and whose moral code they have violated. The awarding of suitable punish-

ment for offences against humanity and international law should therefore fall to an international tribunal, to be set up by the Governments of neutral countries. The judgment of such a tribunal would carry far more moral weight, both now and in future days, than that of a body composed of representatives of the aggrieved nations; the verdict of the one would be deliberate, impartial, and strictly judicial, while the verdict of the other would be formal and mechanical, merely registering a foregone conclusion.<sup>1</sup>

If Germany was convinced that these men had done no wrong, she could not reasonably object to testing the question of their guilt in an impartial court. In the event of her refusal to recognize a court of neutral nations or to comply with its findings, the Governments concerned, if they took their functions seriously and had a proper regard for their dignity, would be able to mark their disapprobation effectively by resorting to moral pressure, if need be to the point of breaking off diplomatic intercourse. Nothing would be likelier to bring Germany to reason than such a step. What is essential is that the German Government and nation should know that they are not above the moral code which is recognized by the rest of mankind.

Meantime, there is more than a fear that the Allies may have weakened their case against German barbarity, owing to the policy of reprisals which has been followed in some directions, and notably in the matter of air raids. That policy may be right or wrong—the question does not concern us here, since it has nothing to do with the peace settlement—but at least it may prove difficult to persuade a judicial tribunal to regard the bombing of open towns as wholly iniquitous in the

<sup>1</sup> Since the above words were written a proposal has been made in the French Parliament that the Allies should create a "high court of justice whose mission it will be to try the responsible authors of crimes of all kinds committed by the enemy during the war. . . . The first paragraph of the peace preliminaries must enact that all persons accused by this high court must be delivered up to it for trial." The objection to the idea of the Allies so acting both as accuser and judge has already been stated.

case of Germany because the first offender, and excusable in the Allies because they merely retaliated.

While, therefore, sympathizing to the full with any measures for bringing home to Germany the heinousness of the crimes which have been done in her name, in so far as such measures are practicable and undertaken in a judicial spirit, I confess with regret to great doubt as to the feasibility of any effective measures of personal reparation. Outrageous and vile as many of the acts ordered by the German high military and naval commands have been, and conspicuously as they stand out in a war without parallel for horror, it seems likely that the Allies will have to be satisfied with the retribution within their own power to award while the belligerent armies still continue to confront each other in the field and the trenches. In a sense, Germany has already paid heavily, and is paying heavily day by day, for her brutality in degrading warfare into sheer murder. Who can doubt that the war has been prosecuted on the side of the Allies, particularly in the West, with far greater vehemence, and even with a consuming anger, owing to the feeling, of which the source lies in instincts deeper in human nature than all the refinements of culture, that Germany's crimes and inhumanities are of a kind that only blood and ever more blood can expiate? <sup>1</sup> And when all has been done that is possible to punish these crimes, the fact remains that the truest and severest punishment will be the judgment of impartial history. It cannot be doubted that the effect of that judgment will be to brand with infamy the authors of these crimes and to commit them to the reprobation and detestation of posterity.

<sup>1</sup> In illustration of the feeling caused in the ranks by Germany's atrocities, I quote the following extracts from a letter from the trenches, the writer of which happens to be known to me :—

"The Hun, in his frenzied craving for world-power, smashed town after town in Belgium and Northern France with amazing disregard for everything which civilization holds dear, murdering old people and young children. In his smashing and devilry he little thought his vile measures would be the means of creating a stubborn determination in the hearts of those people he meant to conquer which as time went on would exact a just retribution. We must have an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."



## CHAPTER XI

### GERMAN AUTOCRACY AND MILITARISM<sup>1</sup>

"My personal opinion is that for a people which is not free defeat is rather favourable than otherwise to its national development. Victories result in a Government the reverse of democratic in type, haughty and exacting in quality, while reverses force the Government to approach the people and win its good-will."—*August Bebel, in "Mein Leben."*

"Might is the supreme right, and the dispute as to what is right is decided by the arbitrament of war."—*General von Bernhardt.*

"We Germans have a characteristic form of *Kultur* in nothing at all except as soldiers."—*G. Fuchs, "Der Kaiser und die Zukunft des deutschen Volkes."*

"It is untrue that the maintenance of peace is the principal purpose of the State, and to say so is to poison the mind of the nation with false and weak ideas."—"Die Post" (*organ of the Prussian feudal-military party*), April 25, 1913.

"Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honour steady to the common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interests of their own."—*President Wilson, in his speech to Congress, April 2, 1917.*

"That spell upon the minds of men  
Breaks never to unite again  
Those Pagod things of sabre sway  
With fronts of brass and feet of clay."  
*Byron, "Ode to Napoleon."*

THREE years before the outbreak of war the organ of the German Socialist party, *Vorwärts*, published an article in which the effect of military disaster upon German constitutional developments was discussed, and the conclusion was drawn that the defeat of Germany in war could not leave her systems of semi-absolutism unmodified.

<sup>1</sup> A portion of this chapter appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, and is reprinted by the permission of the Editors.

If one day (it wrote on April 29, 1911) the threatened world-war occurs, and a European coalition should be directed against the German Empire, how great is the danger that the Empire, whose inner cohesion has been undermined by an obsolete and arrogant *coterie*, may be broken into its original parts. Assume that war occurs (which we less than any others wish) and assume the possibility (though it is not desired by us) that an Anglo-French army broke into North Germany and proclaimed the kingdom of Hanover, to which there are still pretenders, with a Constitution after the English pattern, what an effect would such a proceeding create in Germany, the land so misused by the East Elbe Junkers !

The words are recalled as illustrating a German point of view which seldom receives the recognition which it merits in this country. The Germans may have the form of government which they deserve, but it would be wrong to conclude that they are in the mass satisfied with it. Should Germany come well out of the war, her Government and peoples would, of course, insist upon adjusting their internal affairs alone. If the reverse happens, it would be right and proper to insist that as an integral part of the settlement this Power, having inflicted upon the world so much misery, should be set right within as well as without.

Early in the war German publicists and journalists professed surprise and pain at the promptness and emphasis with which the whole civilized world made known its agreement with the Allied Powers, and the aims and objects with which these Powers were identified. Such a coalition of sentiment and sympathy, implying the moral isolation of a people which had come to regard itself as the light of the world, is unique in the history of the past century, and can only be attributable to profoundly moving causes. Some of the neutral nations may have had special reasons of their own for giving so clear an indication of an anti-German bias, but no one who has followed the trend of world-opinion can have failed to draw the conclusion that while these countries were first brought into line with the Allies by indignation at the callous manner in which

Germany violated treaties and devastated Belgium, they have been united not less by a wholesome detestation of two outstanding, interdependent facts in the national life of that country, its persistent, restless, and aggressive militarism and the political system in which this militarism is rooted.

That the Germans, too, are now fully conscious of the unfavourable light in which these blots on the national escutcheon place them, and of their practical disadvantages for foreign relationships in the future, is proved by the singular attempts which are being made by many of their spokesmen to deny their existence. To people with a prejudice for old-fashioned ideas of candour and veracity it has been something of a moral shock to observe how even well-known German parliamentarians and publicists, who for long years have been engaged in a fruitless struggle for progress and amelioration in constitutional life, have taken a leading part in these endeavours to darken counsel and make things seem what they emphatically are not. Having followed German politics day by day for well-nigh thirty years, I may perhaps claim the right to say that most of these defenders of indefensible political conditions are inviting the world to accept statements which they do not themselves believe. It would be an easy task to confront some of them with public utterances of their own, of quite recent date, passionately affirming the very reverse of all they are now saying.

It is one of the most remarkable facts in modern political history that while within the memory of the present generation almost every other constitutional country in Europe has opened its doors and windows still wider to the fresh air of political free-thought, Germany has been content to live in the old stifling atmosphere of semi-absolutism, of absolutism disporting itself, as Rudolf von Gneist said, "under constitutional forms." France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, for example, have further democratized their parliamentary systems, and Russia and Turkey have joined the fraternity of constitutional States ; while in the distant "unchanging

East " ancient despotisms like those of Japan, China, and Persia have been discarded or overthrown. Nevertheless, the constitutional arrangements of the German Empire, as hastily and faultily framed in 1867 and 1871, have never once been modified, while those of Prussia have undergone no change since the day, now nearly seventy years ago, when a constitution which bitterly disappointed the nation's expectations was offered to it, to take or to leave, by a Sovereign who hated all such tokens of popular desire to share with him the divine responsibilities of kingship, and to the end of his life strove to override and render ineffectual the concessions which he had made unwillingly and repented ever afterwards. At the present moment Germany is the only important undemocratic State of the first rank in the whole world.

Perhaps one may best understand what is wrong with German constitutional life by appealing to the testimony of the men who are endeavouring to set it right. The political programmes of the two great German parties which specially represent what in Great Britain would be regarded as Liberal tendencies in politics, the Progressives and the Social Democrats, both contain proposals to this end. Thus the Progressives demand the " free development of the Imperial Constitution and an Imperial Ministry responsible to the Diet " (at present the Constitution recognizes only one Minister, the Imperial Chancellor, whose colleagues, the Secretaries of State, are really his assistants and subordinates); while the Socialists call for " direct legislation by the nation, by means of the right to initiate and reject laws, self-government in Empire and State, the appointment of the authorities (including Ministers) by the nation, and the responsibility and accountability of the same to the legislature." Political reformers do not usually ask for rights which they already possess, and a recital of these party views indicates with sufficient clearness wherein the special defects of the present system lie.

The fact is that the German system of government, whether in Empire or State, is still essentially one-man

government. For the first twenty-three years of the Empire's existence—dating its birth from 1867, when by the formation of the North German Confederation the first half of the edifice of imperial unity was built—the one man was an autocratic Minister of powerful character and gigantic will, and for the following years he has been the Emperor himself; but whether in the earlier period or the later, a single central figure has dominated the political stage, and in the crowd of minor actors and supernumeraries, as they have passed into and out of view, the world at large has seldom taken more than a fugitive interest. "Hamlet" with the Prince of Denmark left out would be a dreary performance, but "Hamlet" with every one else left out save the melancholy Prince would be a still drearier. That has been the fate of Germany's political drama ever since her constitutional life began. Many of her political leaders have made national reputations as Ministers and statesmen, but excluding the five Chancellors who have served the Empire since 1867, there is hardly one who enjoys an international celebrity in virtue of his political activity alone.

The effect of this system is that it robs politics of human interest, enfeebles public spirit, demoralizes party life, narrows the scope for individual talent, and by discouraging emulation breeds mediocrity. Turning to the Diets and their powers, what do we see? These bodies appear to resemble the parliaments of democratic countries, but the resemblance is only in external things. They have no voice whatever in the appointment and removal of the Ministers, who are not even required to be members of the legislature. For practical purposes German Ministers of State are simply the highest of permanent officials in the most exclusive, undemocratic, and domineering bureaucracies in the world. The Diets co-operate with the Governments in legislation on equal terms, but the effect is that no measure can pass and no resolution have effect unless the Sovereigns are pleased to give their personal assent. It falls to the Executives alone to direct policy, both home and foreign, in accord-

ance with the will of the rulers. A leading German statesman not long ago described the national Diets as so many debating societies, which have an unlimited right to talk but can do little or no practical independent work. If irreconcilable conflicts occur between Government and Parliament, it is the Parliament that has to go; the Government remains. There is a dissolution and a general election, and the whole machinery of the bureaucracy is set in motion in the endeavour to secure the return of a more tractable legislature. There is something strange, and strangely wrong, in the political system of the land of Kant and Fichte, of Lessing and Schiller, of Stein and Humboldt, the land of universities and schools, when it is still possible for its Emperor to say, and say with truth, "One only shall be master in the Empire, and it is I," "There is one will in the Empire, and it is my will," and to pervert Hardenberg's sagacious admonition to that ruler's great-grandfather, "*Salus publica suprema lex esto*" into "*Suprema lex regis voluntas.*"

No German politician of authority has in recent years been more unwearying and unsparing in his indictment, both with voice and pen, of the German political system and the condition of impotence to which it dooms the nation and its legislators than the eloquent Progressive leader, Dr. Friedrich Naumann, the author of "*Mittel-Europa.*" As late as January, 1914, Naumann said in the Imperial Diet:

The man who compares this House to a hall of echoes is not far wrong. To those who are accustomed to do practical work in life it appears a mere waste of time to devote themselves to this difficult and monstrous mechanism. We on the Left (he added) are altogether in favour of the parliamentary régime, by which we mean that the Reichstag cannot for ever remain in a position of subordination. Why does the Reichstag sit at all, why does it pass resolutions, if behind it is a waste-paper basket into which these resolutions are thrown? The problem before us is to exchange the impotence of the Reichstag for some sort of power,

The occasion of these utterances was one of those periodical discussions of its own uselessness in which the Diet is wont to engage. One of the ablest and most moderate of the younger Socialist leaders, Dr. Frank, said on the same occasion :

Many millions of us feel it to be a burning shame that while Germans achieve great things in commerce and industry, in politics they are deprived of rights.

But the strongest condemnation of this system is the intimate relationship in which it stands to the militarism of which Prussia is the special nursery and home, yet which is no longer confined to that State. The earlier suspicion of the Allied and neutral nations, that this militarism is largely the outgrowth of political conditions, has since the outbreak of war deepened into a firm conviction. Here, again, the awakening of the public conscience both to the gravity and the cause of the militarist peril has created much uneasiness and searching of hearts in Germany, and the same men who are declaring that the political system under which they live is faultless are assuring the world that in arraiging the German military system it is likewise labouring under a great hallucination. They challenge Germany's critics to say what they mean by "militarism," and would have the world believe that no such thing exists.

I have attempted in another place a definition of militarism, which I believe rather understates than exaggerates the evil :

The conception of militarism makes the army a direct instrument of State policy and war a legitimate political purpose instead of a terrible abnormality. In accordance with that idea the whole life of the nation is organized on a military plan. The home, the school, professional life, industrial and commercial relationships, the working of the State and public services—all are regulated from the standpoint of warlike possibilities, and subordinated to the one supreme consideration, how best to convert the nation into an efficient fighting machine. In order that this view of State purpose may be

realized, the civilian's placid life is represented as something inferior to the life of the soldier, and a powerful administrative caste is set up, as a class apart from the rest of the nation, whose business it is to personify the military ideal and keep before the nation the view that war is a worthier pursuit than peace.<sup>1</sup>

If, however, German evidence in support of the militarist evil be desired, it is available in abundance. When we are asked by German writers what we mean by militarism, it is only necessary to reply that we mean just what they meant by it down to the eve of war—the claim of the army and the navy administration to be above the nation, its legislature and its laws—a claim first asserted during the Prussian constitutional conflict of 1862-66, and because asserted successfully then, persisted in ever since—and the intolerable pretensions to which this privileged position gives rise. We mean what the Progressive deputy Schrader meant when he said in the Imperial Diet in March, 1909, that “the unrestricted power of the Crown over the army implies that a relic of the absolutist State still remains”; what the deputy Stücklein meant when he said on the same occasion, that “Germany has brought over all Europe the evil of rivalry in armaments”; and what the deputy Scheidemann had in mind when, in the course of a debate upon a cruel sentence of a court-martial (it had sentenced to five years' penal servitude some reservists who had been embroiled in a tavern affray), he declared only a year before the war (June 28, 1913), “We wage a resolute fight against militarism and the entire military system.”

We mean the spirit and order of ideas which led Prince Bülow, though never a soldier, to boast that “Prussia is a military State . . . a nation of soldiers.” We mean the attitude represented by the German delegates to the Peace Conferences at The Hague in 1899 and 1907, who declared that if Germany could help it there should be no disarmament, no tribunal of arbi-

<sup>1</sup> “What is Wrong with Germany?”—chapter on “Prussian Militarism,” p. 114.



tration, no pacific methods for averting the appeal to brute force in the settlement of international disputes, and that no power on earth should prevent Germany from fighting if and when she would.

We mean by militarism the violence and illegality which ran riot at Zabern (Saverne) in December, 1913, and which drew from Dr. Naumann, in his memorable oration of January 23rd following, the severest indictment of the Prussian military spirit and system that has ever left the lips of a responsible German statesman. The German publicists and journalists who are to-day assuring neutral nations that there is no such thing as militarism in their country will do well to look up the report of the Zabern debates in the Imperial Diet during the last month of 1913 and the first month of 1914. There they will find—what, indeed, they well know—how deputies of every colour and shade of politics, with the one exception of the Conservatives, vied with each other in condemning the excesses of the military as a national scandal and a menace to national liberty.

It is a fateful question which is put to the German army (said Naumann on January 23, 1914); it is the question whether force is united with intelligence and humanity. Why has Colonel von Reutter (the ringleader in the episode) become a famous man? Because he has represented the political soldier's order of ideas. For that reason he is applauded as a true soldier by all who want to break down the democratized order of society.

Speaking of the same episode from the National Liberal benches, the moderate Dr. Paasche, now Vice-President of the Diet, said (December 11, 1913):

The Imperial Chancellor cannot console himself with the thought that this is a single incident. It is of no consequence whether the Zabern *régime*, shall be abolished a little sooner or later—it is a question of the spirit which is reflected by the whole proceedings.

Bold for once, the Diet on that notable occasion marked its reprobation of militarism by passing an

emphatic vote of censure (by 293 votes against 54) upon the Government for its hardihood in defending the authors of the Zabern excesses, yet the officers implicated were not removed, and the worst offender, the colonel in command, was promptly decorated with a royal order. It was a German, not an ill-informed foreign writer, who at that time described the Zabern episode as revealing "the military spirit in conflict with the civilian spirit, Prussianism in conflict with the entire sentiment of the rest of Germany, military conceptions in conflict with civilian conceptions of honour" (*Das freie Wort*, February, 1914).

Not to multiply illustrations unduly, though they might be given indefinitely, we mean, finally, by militarism the brutal and brutalizing system which Bebel had in mind when he said at the Mannheim Congress of the Socialist party in 1906: "There is in all Europe no Social-Democratic party, which combats militarism, both inside and outside Parliament, more energetically than the German party. No difference of opinion exists amongst us as to all that has been said here about the moral, political, and social perniciousness of militarism, and the necessity of instructing our youth upon militarism as an atrocity." At the same congress a Prussian delegate used the prophetic words: "We must show the children how their very reading-books are polluted, and how it is the purpose of militarism to make out of man a beast, who with blind fury will destroy everything human."

As for the avowed spokesmen of militarism, it is only necessary to recall the utterances of men like Generals Keim, Liebert, Bernhardt, Deimling, and other braggarts of the *Wehrverein* and the *Alt-Deutscher Verband*, and of the German Chauvinist journalists generally, as collected by their own countryman, Dr. O. Nippold, in his book "Der deutsche Chauvinismus." It is safe to say that nowhere else in the world could sentiments so vicious and wicked be either uttered or conceived by sane people as those which were pilloried for public condemnation by that patriotic German just before the

war, in the hope of staving off, even at the eleventh hour, a catastrophe for which he saw that the Prussian military party was sedulously working.

What this militarism means in actual warfare has been attested by the massacre of Belgium, the sinking of the *Lusitania* and other passenger vessels without warning, the bombing of undefended towns, the murder of Nurse Cavell and Belgian and French women in unknown numbers, the use of poisonous gas and liquid fire, the enslavement of the civilian populations of Belgium, France, and Poland, the brutalities perpetrated upon British prisoners, the poisoning of wells in East Africa, the systematic torpedoing of hospital and refugee ships, the firing upon the Red Cross, and all the other diabolical performances of the German army and navy which have horrified the world during the last three years. Referring to the international agreements regulating the customs of war, and especially those intended to ensure the immunity of non-combatants and the protection of the wounded and nurses, the German Dr. Naumann wrote several years before the war: "Whether all these regulations will be observed remains to be seen: any violation of them would more than anything else revolt the conscience of mankind, since it is here a question of the infraction of binding treaties."<sup>1</sup> The high-minded ex-clergyman who uttered these words was one of the first Germans to defend the violation of the Belgian treaty of neutrality as "the right of Germany as the stronger nation."

No one in Germany doubts—before the war the question was no longer argued—that the evils of militarism are primarily due to the entire absence of any parliamentary control over the army and the military organization generally. Under the Imperial Constitution this control is vested in the Emperor personally.

<sup>1</sup> "Das blaue Buch des Vaterlands," p. 262. It may be recalled also how in his book "Imperial Germany" Prince Bülow writes: "No people in the world has so strong a consciousness of right as the German. Nowhere does a breach of the law, common law or public law, produce such passionate indignation, nowhere is it so difficult to forget, as with us."

The Minister of War is his Minister ; the administration of both army and navy from first to last is his business only ; the Diet votes the estimates, but it is he who spends the money ; he alone concludes alliances and (with few exceptions treaties with foreign States ; and while it is true that to the declaration of war the assent of the Federal Council is needed, that only means that on such a solemn occasion he consults the other Sovereigns, for the Diet and the nation are not consulted at all. The institution of a genuine system of parliamentary government would naturally involve effective control by the Diet over the military system and the military administration ; that is, the Minister of War would be as much subject to the will of the legislature, and through it of the nation, as in either Great Britain or France. The best safeguards of peace which the wisdom of diplomacy may devise will prove futile unless this necessary change is made, since there must always be a danger that Governments which scoff at liberty at home will scoff at law abroad:

It is sometimes said that maintenance of the present political system is necessary in order to counteract the dangerous assumptions of Social Democracy. Those who argue thus forget that Social Democracy was to a large extent created, and has been made powerful, by the very political conditions which are now held to be the only reliable safeguard against it. Of all the failures of Bismarck's policy—and only blind adulation and a one-sided estimate of his greatness as a statesman can gainsay them—his struggle with democratic movements is the most conspicuous. When he became a Minister, Socialism hardly existed, for Lassalle's Collectivism was little more than a large scheme of industrial co-operation with State assistance, and moreover his political agitation remained to the last in monarchical channels. It was Bismarck who gave an impetus to the movement which cut the working classes adrift from the *bourgeoisie* as a political estate apart, and drove them into the hands of the International. He chose to

challenge Liberalism, and he did it on the worst possible issue, that of constitutional right; and though he was able to claim an apparent victory, the effect of his success was to force the labour wing of the Liberal party into a separate organization, which in time became the most formidable force in German politics. Out of Germany no student of politics doubts that the most fertile cause of Social Democracy has been the denial to the German nation of the elementary right of citizenship, as understood in free countries, the right of self-government. The remedy for the extremer political demands of Social Democracy lies in the removal, as far as may be practicable, of the consciousness of political inequality and impotence from which the working classes suffer. Prince Bülow writes in his book "Imperial Germany" that there can never be any parley with Social Democracy until it has made peace with the monarchy. A wiser statesman would have reversed this order of ideas, and have done his utmost to persuade and assist the monarchy to commend itself, by the pursuance of a policy of clemency, toleration, and equity, to some millions of enfranchized and intelligent citizens, whose most urgent demand is that they shall be regarded as equal before the law and be given the rights of free men. So long as it has been bidden to regard itself as outside society, what could Social Democracy do but fight against a social order which was thus self-proclaimed as its enemy? Let it be given a real stake in the State, and its extravagances will fall away; whether it succeed in transforming society or be itself transformed by society, it will then work for peaceful ends by peaceful means.

No country has had a more wholesome experience of the moderating influence of free institutions upon national character and political movements than Great Britain, and its testimony may well be commended for Germany's encouragement. When at the Congress of Vienna, over a hundred years ago, the German Princes were quarrelling about their "sovereignty" and "sovereign rights," claiming powers which they had never possessed before

in the dissolved Empire, and grudging to the nation the liberty at home which was the just reward of its recent patriotic sacrifices, one solitary voice rebuked their blindness, fear, and greed. It was the spokesman of the British Crown, represented in that august but faint-hearted assembly by the Kingdom of Hanover, and these were his memorable words (October 21, 1814) :

His Royal Highness the Prince Regent of Great Britain and Hanover cannot agree that quite unlimited and purely despotic rights in relation to their subjects pertain to the German Princes. . . . As for all this clinging to the expression "sovereignty," the King of Great Britain is just as indisputably Sovereign as any other Prince in Europe, *yet his throne is not weakened but rather strengthened by the freedom of his people.*

Those golden words of counsel and warning, given to Germany by a country whose ruler and people had fought out their battles over the eternal problem of political life, *Suum cuique*, and made perpetual peace, were disregarded, and terrible was the retribution. Goaded into disloyalty by intolerance and repression, when the French revolution of 1848 broke out the German peoples likewise rose against their rulers in just resentment ; many thrones were shaken and overturned, and many Princes fled ignominiously before perils which their consciences told them were due to their own short-sightedness and folly. At this time of ferment it was monarchies which enjoyed free constitutions, like Great Britain and Belgium, which proved the real *rochers de bronze*. Not only Louis Philippe, but the Austrian Chancellor Metternich and the Prince of Prussia himself, sought refuge in England. Sitting in his quiet London embassy, the Chevalier Bunsen admired the demeanour of the loyal populace, but was prepared for it, for in political thought he was far more English than Prussian. But Count Beust, his Saxon colleague, tells in his "Memoirs" how, after travelling through various parts of Germany, at that time, and witnessing everywhere ferment and tumult, and the violent removal

of old landmarks, he returned to London and, to his great amazement, there found everything as he had left it—the population tranquil and unmoved, no signs anywhere of popular disaffection, and the royal family going in and out amongst the people in perfect security. Was ever a stronger tribute paid to the steadfast loyalty of a free, emancipated people?

All later developments of popular rights have only served to confirm the moral of 1848. I well remember a conversation with Rudolf von Gneist, the well-known author of "Die englische Verfassung," upon the constitutional changes which had then just taken place in the United Kingdom. Old Liberal though he was, who had fought Bismarck in the constitutional conflict twenty years before, the famous jurisconsult assured me that he was deeply apprehensive of the results of the recent reforms, and warned me in impressive and almost resentful language—for his attachment to this country and his reverence for its institutions were sincere and deep—that England was advancing in political experiment far too fast for safety, and would in a few years be a republic. Perhaps the audacity of youth excused the reply which I laughingly returned, though events were to justify it. "Herr Professor," I said, "you understand the English constitution, but not the English nation." The old man reflected for a moment, then said quietly, "Perhaps." What do we see to-day? The old sentiments of loyalty and patriotism quickened and deepened by an unexampled fervour; the British races drawn by their own free-will closer than ever before to the monarchy; their ruler never so assured as now by a thousand signs, in the midst of war's distractions and alarms, that his throne is "not weakened but rather strengthened by the freedom of his people."

"But for Prussia we should have a democratic Germany," said August Bebel on one occasion, voicing the conviction not only of the Social Democrats but of the popular parties generally. In so speaking, however, he only said what hundreds of other public men had said before. Gustav Freytag wrote the same thing

half a century ago, and his words are as true to-day as then :

The entire political contention of the present, the struggle against privileges, the constitutional question, the German question itself, are all in the last resort only questions of Prussian internal politics, and the ultimate difficulty of their solution depends primarily on the position taken up towards them by the Prussian royal house.<sup>1</sup>

Because, however, Prussia blocks the way, it is plain that the responsibility for the change which must be made if Europe is to have peace rests with William II in a double sense, as head both of the monarchy and of the Empire. "The time has now come," wrote Dr. Naumann several years ago, "for negotiating upon the impersonalizing of the throne. Government shall be in the name of the King and Emperor, but not by him. Government shall be exercised on the commission of the Emperor by the trusted confidants of the parliamentary majority. That means for the Emperor a great renunciation. From absolutism to the English system! That is the goal of German development." Will the Emperor and the other Sovereigns be ready to make that renunciation for the good of the nation and the Empire? The risks lie rather in refusal than compliance. Never was there a time when it was so obviously their duty and interest to introduce, as Hardenberg wrote in 1807, "democratic principles in a monarchical State," and so bring about "a revolution in a good sense." High hopes and confident expectations are being indulged by their peoples, and to ignore and thwart them now, when the German nation stands before tasks of reorganization and recuperation far exceeding in magnitude those which had to be faced a century ago, would be an act of short-sightedness and folly which would bring a heavy retribution.

The frivolous objection that the German nation is not yet ripe for full self-government, and would misuse

<sup>1</sup> "Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit," vol. iv., p. 486.



the large powers which it claims, not from malice but inexperience, to its own hurt and the loss of prestige throughout the world, would be undeserving of notice were it not met with so frequently. Bismarck first exploited this notion, originally by way of compliment, when he told the Prussian Lower House in 1862, on the eve of the constitutional conflict, that the nation was "perhaps too educated, too critical," to live under a Constitution, but later by way of reproach and in justification of his refusal to depart one hair's breadth from the strict letter of a petrified formulary. Since his day the idea has been one of the stock arguments of the reactionary party; in recent years it has been used by writers so different as Prince Bülow the statesman and General von Bernhardt the militarist. The alleged political incapacity of the German nation is, of course, a fiction, manufactured and employed by those whose interest it is to preserve the existing system. These men know too well that immediately the nation is placed in full control of the parliamentary machine a new day of liberty will dawn for Germany, and that the obstructionists who retard her progress in so many directions will be brushed aside, for it is true, as the historian Lamprecht says, that "While the constitutional machinery of Germany is monarchical and conservative, the nation is democratic and progressive."

It is worth noting that of twelve and a quarter million voters who took part in the last elections to the Imperial Diet—those of 1912—five and three-quarter millions represented strongly democratic sentiments (the Social Democrats and the Progressives), while one and three-quarter million more supported candidates (National-Liberal, Guelph, and Danish) who were at least identified with progressive movements in politics. These groups together accounted for seven and a half million voters. On the other hand, the parties identified with reactionary ideas, the German Conservatives and Imperialists, counted only a million and a half adherents. Thus without counting their sympathizers in the Clerical party, which on the whole is more sympathetic to progressive than reactionary ten-

dencies, the ratio of political Liberalism to political Conservatism was broadly as five to one.

The German rulers will also do well to reflect upon the serious handicap which will weigh upon the representatives of their country if they enter the congress-room at Brussels, or wherever else the peace plenipotentiaries may meet, without at least having given to the world such pledges as will make the discussion of this question superfluous. Let them reflect that their country is to-day isolated in the world. No nation can afford, least of all in modern times, to ignore that wise saying of M. Thiers, uttered at a time when France was striving to re-establish herself in the confidence and respect of Europe :

Man needs the esteem of his fellows, and nations have need of the esteem of other nations. A day comes, too, when we need support, moral support at the least, and one only finds it if one has deserved it.

By her action at the commencement of the war, and still more by her "methods of frightfulness" since—methods which have created not fear, but only disgust and abhorrence, and steeled in the Allies the will to final victory—Germany has alienated from her side the conscience of mankind, and convinced the world that there is in her conception of warfare, as nurtured by militarism, something not only evil but devilish and accursed. She has much leeway to make up in national repute, much to atone for, much for which in the near future she will perchance long to crave the priceless boon of oblivion. She will get back her trade and will again become a great industrial country, and the old diplomatic ties will inevitably be renewed: that comfort is certainly hers. But international intercourse means far more than commerce and diplomacy, and between such formal ties and the community of social, intellectual, and moral ideals upon which the true concert of the nations is based there is a great gulf fixed. Germany is no longer a member of that intimate fellowship of

mind and spirit ; she has not been ostracized, but has ostracized herself, and so long as her militarism and the political system in which it is rooted continue she will seek for readmission in vain. In an impressive letter which that wise man, Sir Robert Morier, wrote to the Crown Prince Frederick of Germany in May, 1875, warning him to guard against Bismarck's plottings against the peace of Europe, there occurs a passage which exactly describes the present crisis in the history of the German nation :

An individual (he wrote) may, under the dæmonic impulse of superhuman cynicism, laugh to scorn the opinion and conscience of contemporary mankind. I can conceive of an Attila chuckling even on the brink of the grave at the thought of living in the memory of future generations as the Scourge of God ; but a nation cannot afford to enjoy the luxury of cynicism, cannot risk to place itself outside the pale of the opinions of mankind, because a nation never dies, and the conscience of mankind never dies, and when the orgies of successful force have spent their strength the day comes when it has to live not with its own recollections, but with those which mankind have preserved of it. It was the living, not the dead Cain that was branded as the murderer of his brother.

It is true that the Emperor, as King of Prussia, has promised a democratic franchise, with redistribution of seats. That will be an advance if only the promise is fulfilled, though it is only right to say that there is nothing in Prussian history to justify the belief that it will be, for upon the question of popular government that history has for a century been an unbroken record of royal perfidy and contemptuous disregard of national aspirations. Yet constitutional reforms in Prussia will not suffice. Europe and the world care little about Prussia except in so far as the Prussian King and Government, Prussian militarism, and the Prussian spirit dominate the German Empire and Imperial policy. What is needed is that the German nation shall have control of its affairs from first to last, and that can only come about when Germany passes

under a genuine parliamentary *régime*. Will the Emperor and the other German Sovereigns agree to that necessary departure, which even so conservative a statesman as Bismarck regarded as the eventual goal of German constitutional development? If not, or if at least there is not by the time the Peace Congress meets a clear guarantee that it will be promptly taken, the Allies should apply all the pressure at their command with a view to enforcing the step. There are various ways in which this might be done, and done effectively. Germany at the present moment is without colonies, and her ships and commerce have been swept from the sea. It would be legitimate to warn her betimés that neither of the embargoes would be removed until she had rid herself of a system of government which makes her a source of so much danger to other nations.

German publicists and newspapers are declaring daily that this question is one for Germany exclusively—one for her to deal with or to let alone as she pleases. In the abstract it is true that sovereign States are entitled to adopt just such political arrangements as they desire. But such a claim is subject to limitations, and when these arrangements produce results menacing to the peace and security of other countries, outside protest is legitimate, and may be imperative. We know what would have been the attitude towards this objection of Lord Palmerston, who attacked despotic government wherever he found it, and counted amongst his "many good works" the assistance which he gave to downtrodden nations to rid themselves of tyrannical rulers and establish parliamentary government. History, indeed, offers many valuable precedents for such intervention in the constitutional affairs of sovereign States. The classical precedent is the treatment of Napoleon and France by the Powers assembled at the Congress of Vienna in 1814, when the Emperor was outlawed and a new form of government imposed upon the country which he had brought to ruin, in sign that his power had been for ever broken. It is not necessary to go so far back, however, for the Powers have regulated the government

of the Turkish Empire in Europe for more than two generations.

Equally pertinent precedents are furnished by Germany herself. Prussia has more than once intervened in the affairs of neighbouring States on the ground that their constitutional conditions were intolerable and a source of public danger. That was one of the reasons for her interference in the Schleswig-Holstein dispute in 1848 and again in 1864, and it was the sole reason of her high-handed action in Electoral Hesse in 1849, and again, and still more vigorously, in 1862. It will also be recalled how, when the Franco-German War was wearing itself out in the autumn of 1870, Bismarck refused to negotiate with the self-appointed tribunes of the beaten nation until France had elected a representative Government entitled to speak and act on her behalf. It was at that time that Mr. Gladstone protested against "the doctrine that no country can have a new Government without the consent of the old one" as "utterly opposed to the modern notions of public right." Germany could have no ground for objecting to the application to herself of the principles which she has always been ready enough to apply to other countries. At any rate, the remedy is in her own hands: it is that she should reform herself while she has still the chance. If she fails to do this, it should be the business of the Allied and Neutral States which will take part in the peace settlement to insist upon the measure, with all the coercive means within their power, as one needful for their own safety.

I am aware that this view is opposed by an influential section of British public opinion as implying an unjustifiable interference in Germany's internal affairs, but I am also aware that many of those who advance this objection would be quite prepared to relieve the German Empire of the whole of Alsace-Lorraine and Prussia of her Polish districts, thus handing over to alien rule several millions of Germans, and would deprive Germany of her colonies, so destroying at a stroke an entire department of national government, and inflicting grave injury upon the commercial and industrial life of the country. With-

out arguing the extent to which these measures similarly involve intervention in Germany's domestic affairs, the consideration which appears to me to outweigh all abstract objections of the kind is the impossibility of effectually combating militarism by any other weapon than drastic constitutional reform. Out of the Central Powers there is not a statesman in Europe who does not agree that one of the most imperious objects of the war and the after settlement is the destruction of Prussian militarism. But he who wills the end must will the means. The evil cannot be eradicated by merely defeating the German armies, for militarism would remain as before, nor yet by imposing indemnities, however heavy. The evil, I repeat, lies in the political system, and so long as that system continues, so long shall we look in vain for relief.

The entrance of the United States into the war as an active combatant happily justifies the hope that this question will not be ignored out of a misplaced regard for a purely pedantic objection. In his address in the Senate on January 22, 1917, President Wilson said :

There is only one sort of peace that the peoples of America could join in guaranteeing. The elements of that peace must be elements that engage the confidence and satisfy the principles of the American governments, elements consistent with the political faith and the practical convictions which the peoples of America have once for all embraced and undertaken to defend.

In this and similar declarations President Wilson has shown a true perception of the real source of mischief in German national life, and his unwillingness to be a party to any peace settlement which omitted to remedy it is one of the most hopeful facts in the situation. Let autocracy be dethroned and the German nation come into possession of its long-withheld political rights, and an incubus will be removed not only from Europe, but from the whole world. There are probably few people who, knowing Germany by long study and intimate contact, and not merely from the crowd of war-books, so many of which enshrine shallow judgments

and false and ungenerous generalizations, will not readily endorse the words of the late Belgian Minister to Berlin, Baron Beyens—words the more magnanimous because of their source :

I feel convinced that the Germans, delivered from the shackles of their present Constitution, and governed no longer by officials but by responsible Ministers, owing their position to popular suffrage, would return to their better nature, to an ideal of progress on peaceful lines.

Those Germans who object—they are found only in the military caste which works the fighting machine, bullies the nation into subjection to its will, and makes wars when it is ready for them, as the world saw in 1866, 1870, and again in 1914—that parliamentary control of the army would undermine military discipline and endanger national security do not flatter the patriotism of their countrymen. The experience of Western countries has long been a standing refutation of such an objection, and if added disproof were needed it is offered by the magnificent response given by the British race, not only at home, but throughout the world, to the call of duty in August, 1914. It would have been ludicrous to describe Great Britain three years ago as a "military State." She had relied upon a standing army so small that Bismarck, when once asked what he would do with it if perchance it were to land on German shores, replied, "Arrest it!" and the reserves and territorial forces behind this force were only adequate, and only intended, for home defence. Her people had never known compulsory service save as a phrase which to most minds suggested only the benighted ways of foreign despotisms, and they had prided themselves, perhaps too complacently, upon their happy immunity from the rigorous military *régime* of Continental nations.

Yet in the hour of need the traditions and prejudices of generations were instantly cast aside; the flower of the nation's young manhood rushed to the recruiting depôts and barracks as though to the playing-fields on which

their endurance and fortitude had been steeled and their love of fair, clean rivalry had been bred and nurtured. It is no exaggeration to say that history records no worthy counterpart to that great rally of the British peoples. Without compulsion of any kind, three million men, drawn from every rank and class, of whom the vast majority had never borne arms before, and for whom the idea of military service was an abstraction far removed from the realities of life, had within a few months enrolled themselves in the New Armies. Since then two millions more have joined the colours, and of these, again, the greater number responded to no pressure save that of patriotism and a sense of duty; even of the men who were called up under the Military Service Act it is safe to say that the majority had only been waiting to be told in due official form that the need for their services was really urgent.

Perhaps the loyal acceptance by the nation at large—and to their eternal praise be it said, by the working classes conspicuously—of the principle of compulsion, when at last it came to be applied, was even more impressive than the response of the volunteers, for it proved to all the world how strong in the British race are the instincts of duty, legality, and loyalty to the commonwealth.

How, after the first little expeditionary force of highly trained men—the finest army that ever took the field, as Lord French has called it—had been decimated, the new armies leaped into the breach, and fought in a hundred fights, in Flanders, Gallipoli, the Balkans, Mesopotamia, and Africa, is best known to the enemy. The ill-considered words of contumely which were applied to the British force at an early stage in the war, not indeed by true soldiers, but by mimic warriors who exercised their courage in safety in pillaged French *châteaux* far behind the fighting line, have been repaid to Germany in good measure, pressed down and running over. The heroism and exploits of the invincible British soldiers have given to the phrase “citizen armies” a new meaning, which will not soon be forgotten in that country.



No one will deny that the enemy has fought gallantly and often with utter disregard of life, yet for a century the making of soldiers has been Prussia's principal industry, and no less an authority than Prince Bülow boasts in his book, "Imperial Germany," that Prussia is a State "whose citizens are accustomed to discipline, who have learned in the army unconditional obedience, and who feel daily and hourly the stern pressure of the apparatus of administration." It has been left to Great Britain, the home of democratic institutions, to afford to the world an inspiring proof that a free people, owning no laws except those which issue from its own will, can be trusted to do its duty, and to do it readily, in the hour of national danger, without submission to the eternal repression and regimentation upon which German militarism relies for its authority and efficiency, and that in practice volunteer armies, reared in the atmosphere of liberty, are more than a match for the best pressed armies in the world. For it is indeed true, as Mr. Gladstone once finely said, that "there is no bulwark so strong as the breasts of free men." But Great Britain has done more; she has proved that soldiers—British soldiers at least—fit to take the field and able to beat the picked regiments of the German Army, both in trench warfare and in the open, can be trained in six months without ever seeing the outside of a barracks or learning the mysteries of the goose-step.

"It is not always the standing armies that have saved thrones and States," said Gneisenau, when in 1811 urging upon Frederick William III of Prussia a scheme for reorganizing his army on a militia basis, and in so doing it was to the England of Alfred that he pointed for proof of his words. Prussia herself was saved by a voluntary army at that time, when the military system created by Frederick the Great had broken down. Those who contend that Prussian militarism as we know it, with the concentration of military affairs in the hands of a privileged caste, is an indispensable condition of national safety go in the face of experience and pay a poor compliment to the patriotism of their own kinsmen.

It will be a happy day for the world when the words spoken in the House of Commons just a hundred years ago of the British nation can be applied to Germany :

We require no military establishments to nurse our martial spirit. It is our distinction that we have ever proved ourselves in time of need a nation of warriors, and that we have never been a people of soldiers. It is no refinement to say that the national courage and intellect have acted with the more vigour on the approach of hostility because we are not teased and worried into petty activity ; because a proud and serious people have not been degraded, in their own eyes, by acting their awkward part in holiday parade. . . . But where the pursuits of peace require the highest activity, and the nature of the government calls forth the highest spirit, the whole people must always possess the materials and principles of a military character. Free men are brave, because they rely upon themselves.<sup>1</sup>

It may be asked, Should Germany, then, go over at once to the unicameral system, and thus accept democratic government in a purer and less diluted form than any other Western country? So complete a transformation is not necessary, and perhaps is not desirable. Nevertheless, it must be obvious that a democratized Diet and the Federal Council as now constituted could not live harmoniously side by side, for the Federal Council is in no sense whatever representative of the nation, or any part of it except the federal Sovereigns. A First Chamber would, however, be both consistent with the constitutional practice of all the German States and in keeping with the ideas of most of the early reformers who hoped to realize German unity by liberty. Such a Chamber, constituted by the methods of nomination by the Sovereigns or Governments and co-optation by the Imperial and State Diets, with in addition some representation of the great economic corporations—e.g. the Federations of the statutory Chambers of Commerce, Agriculture, and Handicrafts—and perhaps of the Uni-

<sup>1</sup> Speech of Sir James Mackintosh, philosopher, historian, and friend of Canning, February 28, 1816.

versities, might prove an institution of great practical utility which other European countries, incommoded with Senates more immobile in composition, might be disposed to envy.

In the negotiations upon the ultimate treaty of peace between the belligerents it may fall within the power of the Allies to give effect to the principle of popular sovereignty in another way which would hardly fail to afford satisfaction to the German people. The preliminaries of peace will no doubt have to be concluded with the enemy rulers and Governments, but it should be made clear at an early stage that in the later negotiations, preliminary to a definitive peace, the Allies will not be prepared to treat with the German and Austrian Emperors or representatives solely deputed by them. This is a point upon which, the more the war has progressed, public opinion in the Allied countries has become increasingly insistent, and since the overturn of the Russian autocracy, which might have proved an obstacle in the way of any such cavalier treatment of sovereignty, it is probable that the only possible source of opposition to such a course has disappeared.

The German Government, and German writers without number, have freely assured us for many months that all they want is an honourable peace. So also do the Allies. But an honourable peace can only be concluded by and between honourable men. There is not a country or a Government outside the conglomerate known as "Central Europe" which would to-day trust the word or accept the pledge of the men who in 1914 violated the treaties under which their Government had guaranteed the independence of Belgium and Luxemburg, and whose conduct of the war has at every stage been marked by a callous disregard of solemn international agreements and the written and unwritten law of nations. The many exhibitions of duplicity and bad faith which Germany has given of late have simply repeated the worst devices of Prussian statecraft. How many people know that the clumsy conspiracies in Ireland, India, and the United States are in the Prussian tradition? It is not necessary

to go back for precedents to the times of Frederick the Great, who paved the way for the first partition of Poland by bribery, subornation, and the free use of *agents provocateurs* and despicable informers.<sup>1</sup> In the Bohemian War of 1866 Bismarck, with the full knowledge of King William I, a man otherwise of great personal probity, tried to incite passive Hungary to rebellion against Austria and to raise regiments of malcontents amongst the Slavic races. The plot entirely failed, just as did the plot to win Irish prisoners in Germany for a conspiracy against England, but that the base ruse of 1866 could be revived half a century later shows how small an advance in public morality has been made by the men who at present govern Germany, direct the conduct of her army, and have the sole right to speak for her and pledge her faith in international relationships. Men who treat honour so lightly must themselves be treated lightly. Public opinion would never forgive statesmen who placed themselves unreservedly in the hands of rulers and Ministers to whom treaties are "scraps of paper," and who in their public dealings act on the principle that morality does not count in politics and that the end justifies the means.

If, therefore, the Allies are able to dictate terms of peace, it will be their right to say with whom they will and will not treat. It has been shown that the Allies of 1814 did this in their dealings with France, when they refused to recognize Napoleon; but Bismarck did the same thing in his negotiations with that country in 1870, when he required the French people to elect a National Assembly which should be empowered to choose plenipotentiaries to act on its behalf. Similarly the Allies to-day must insist that the representatives of Germany in the peace negotiations shall be directly authorized by the nation through its legislative assembly, the Imperial Diet. No parliament more democratic in

<sup>1</sup> The story, amply documented, is told in the rare book, "Materialien zur Geschichte polnischer Landestheile unter preussischer Verwaltung" (Leipzig, 1861), for his copy of which the author is indebted to the late Baron Chlupowski, a highly respected leader of the Prussian Polish party.

the method of its election and in its composition exists in Europe, notwithstanding that its legislative powers are so restricted, and delegates who received its mandate would be in the truest sense representative of the nation. If to save the Emperor's *amour-propre*, and to avoid the risk of a deadlock, his nominees were to be recognized subject to ratification by the Diet, the same purpose would be achieved of giving expression for the first time in German history—except in a modified way during the brief career of the Frankfort Parliament of 1848-9—to the principle of popular sovereignty in relation to the highest affairs of State. If Europe is to have any hope of a better future, its affairs will have to be taken out of the hands of the old school of diplomacy, and this would be a beginning in the right direction.

On the other hand, the idea, popular amongst not a few well-meaning persons, that the Allies should not only refuse to treat with the German Emperor, but should insist upon his abdication, and perhaps upon the deposition of the entire Hohenzollern line, will not be taken seriously by any one who can claim to understand the relationship of the Germans themselves to their Sovereigns and of the Prussians in particular to their reigning house.

To many people in democratic countries willing to accept monarchy for themselves as a useful working principle, subject always to their claim to judge the institution by the practical proof of its success as determined by tests, more or less arbitrary, of their own choosing, the strong and persistent attachment of the German races to their more or less absolute Sovereigns seems merely a survival of political backwardness. There are behind it strong historical justifications, however, and of this fact Prussia affords better evidence than any other German State.

It is impossible to understand the great power of the monarchy in Prussia and the strength of the national attachment to the Hohenzollerns unless certain distinctive facts in Prussian history are borne in mind. It is literally true, as Seeley in particular amongst English historians has pointed out, that the Prussian State as a

political, and essentially as an economic and cultural, organization is the creation of its rulers. Not its Parliament—for this has only existed since the middle of last century—but its Electors and Kings, have made Prussia, in the good as in the dubious features of its life, what it is to-day. From the first they have ruled as well as reigned.

It is true that in conformity with their policy of steady and persistent aggression they have primarily organized the State with a view to military efficiency; nevertheless, their statecraft has for this very reason been characterized by constant solicitude for its economic and material development and its intellectual interests. No Hohenzollern carried out the policy of "patriarchalism" more systematically and successfully than Frederick the Great, who spoke of himself as "the first servant of the State." The policy laid down by him has in all essential features been continued to the present day, and of recent Sovereigns none has followed it more faithfully than William II. If the State's first servant has also been its master, the explanation must be sought in the military organization of the country and in the fact that every concession in the direction of self-government has been made to the nation on the clear understanding that it must be regarded as a gift of the ruler and not a right of the subject.

On the whole the nation has been willing to accept this situation as an implication of the facts of history. Even to-day the doctrine of "divine right," incomprehensible as it may sound to British ears, cannot be regarded as merely an aberration of the Hohenzollerns, for it is held by a not inconsiderable part of the nation. With the Conservatives it is still an article of faith, and though the political parties which represent more advanced thought reject the doctrine as what the historian Treitschke called it, "a piece of Jacobite mysticism," they are, with the single exception of the Social Democrats, warmly attached both to the monarchy and the reigning house.

To do violence to this powerful sentiment of a people that is not by temperament revolutionary or disposed

to violent changes would be a mistake productive of incalculable mischief. It is probable that nothing would be so likely to unite the Germans more closely, not merely in Prussia, but in other federal States, particularly in North and Central Germany, than the suspicion that the dethronement of the Hohenzollerns was one of the purposes of the Allies.

The fact must be recognized that the Germans as a nation do not believe that their Emperor has led them into this war from motives of ambition or aggression, still less that the war has been undertaken for the purpose of covering up failures in foreign or mistakes of domestic policy. They are convinced now as before that the war was forced upon their country, and that the struggle was for them one of defence and self-preservation. This opinion has been immensely strengthened by the irresponsible and unauthorized speculations upon the dismemberment of Prussia and the Empire which have been and still are freely indulged in both in this country and France. That the head of the Hohenzollern dynasty may deserve no consideration at the hands of the Allied nations does not alter the fact that a Germany or a Prussia, deprived of its lawful Sovereign, would be a far greater danger to the peace of Europe than it is to-day.

And even if it were true that the Hohenzollern dynasty is the misfortune for Prussia and Germany which its critics in other countries are apt to assume, there is still something to be said for the reply given by Richard Cobden to those of his countrymen who in the middle of last century were urging that Louis Napoleon, already steeped in the conspiracies against the public law and treaties of Europe which turned even the Whig statesmen of that day against him, ought to be required to abdicate for the good of France. "Why should not the French," he asked, "be allowed the opportunity of deriving some of the advantages which we have gained from bad Sovereigns?" The liberties of most nations have been advanced more by bad than by good rule.

Nevertheless, it would be a good arrangement for Germany, and therefore for Europe, if the German

Emperors were in future to be elective, and the imperial office were in theory to be thrown open to all the Princes. Looking back upon the forty-seven years of the Empire's existence, it cannot be said that the decision which made the office hereditary in the house of Hohenzollern has been justified by the results. Until three years ago it used to be said that the Empire was peace, but while the statement was true it needed qualification. The first Emperor, who reigned from 1871 to 1888, was undoubtedly devoted heart and soul to the cause of peace; he would never tolerate talk of war, and his conversations with Prince Hohenlohe show that he resented in his Chancellor Bismarck even the appearance of playing with firearms. The second Emperor, had he for Germany's good been spared a longer life, would have striven with equal earnestness to maintain peace, and would perhaps have established it more securely by admitting the nation to a larger share in the management of its affairs. Reviewing, however, the twenty-nine years of the present Emperor's reign, and particularly the part which Germany has played, under his impetuous and often erratic guidance, in foreign affairs, the best that can be said is that until the summer of 1914 peace was preserved in spite of much provocation and menace on his part, for the constant clatter of his sabre and his perpetual glorification of the profession of arms were for Europe at large a source of profound unrest.

Yet even though the Empire until July, 1914, had enjoyed more than four decades of uninterrupted peace, it was an armed peace, a peace maintained on conditions that became increasingly intolerable both at home and abroad. For the more Germany increased her armaments, the more other nations were compelled in self-defence to do the same, until Europe groaned under the burden of expenditure and waste which was crushing out its very life, yet which she was unable to cast off. It is perhaps not generally known in how large a degree the present Emperor is responsible for the growth of the Empire's military and naval expenditure, and the following figures will throw light on the subject. The year after the



Empire was established (1872) the expenditure upon the army and navy together was £27,500,000. When William II came to the throne (1888) the corresponding expenditure was still under £33,000,000. In 1912 the cost of the army and navy exceeded £66,000,000, and in the following year special expenditure increased the total to over £96,000,000. And what has Germany gained in return for this enormous and wasteful drain upon her resources, which has reacted ruinously upon the finances of the rest of the European Powers and kept the Continent in a continual state of unrest, trepidation, and anxiety? Even before the war she had undoubtedly lost in prestige and influence abroad, while the *Welt-politik* which, at the beginning of his reign, the present Emperor declared to be a condition of her taking a rightful place amongst or before the other nations, and which was held to justify the unexampled increase of the army and the creation of a powerful fleet, has proved a phantom and has led to her undoing.

Remembering all this, and recalling the exaggerated claims of personal power which the Emperor has been in the habit of asserting—claims going beyond the strict letter of the Constitution—many thoughtful Germans out of Prussia, and especially in the South, had begun to ask themselves even before the war whether the Empire had not paid too high a price for the privilege of being ruled by the Hohenzollern dynasty, and were wondering whether those men were not right who in 1870 opposed the idea of abandoning the elective principle, which had existed in the old Empire. For the early Emperors were chosen by all the Princes, and though in the fourteenth century this wide basis of election was abolished, the same principle was maintained to the end, though confined to a handful of the more powerful rulers, the so-called "Electors." Frederick the Great appears to have held the elective principle in such regard in the case of the Kings of Poland that he entered into a treaty with Catherine of Russia whereby both Sovereigns undertook to maintain it by force if necessary.

It may be recalled that the arrangement which made

the imperial title hereditary in the Prussian royal family was not the work of the nation, which was never consulted in the first instance, nor was it to the will of all the Princes. The King of Bavaria assented only unwillingly to an imperial title at all, and when at a later stage he learned that it was proposed to make it hereditary in the Prussian royal house, he declared that had he known that such a thing was intended he would never have thrown in his lot with the Empire. The rulers of some other States were no less opposed to this exaltation of the Hohenzollerns, but for reasons of prudence they made no open stand. Certainly an hereditary Emperorship formally vested in the Kings of Prussia cannot be said to be a necessity of German unity. Prussia's hegemony is secured by her very position—her size, population, and political and material pre-eminence—and even were a Wittelsbacher, for example, to be the occasional head of the Empire, instead of a Hohenzollern, Prussia would not lose in real dignity. It may be that if the States were allowed to choose at every succession, their choice would continue to fall upon the Prussian Sovereign whenever he had given proof of sagacity corresponding to the responsibility of the office. If that qualification were lacking, they would be wise enough to think more of their own welfare than of the *amour-propre* of the Hohenzollerns.

And even if in practice the Kings of Prussia remained in unbroken succession, the very fact of their life tenure of office would exercise upon them a wholesome restraint, and one which the events of the past twenty-nine years show to have been sorely needed. It is hardly conceivable that such sentiments as "There is one will in the Empire, and that is my will," and "I am the master, and I tolerate no other," which the present generation of German Princes has tolerated so meekly, will commend themselves to all the rulers of all the States for all time, and such submissiveness would bode ill for the future of the Empire and nation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "What is Wrong with Germany?" (1915), p. 224, by the same author.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE ORGANIZATION OF PEACE

"I consider that in the question now at issue in France is involved the more vital question, whether the world can return to that moral system by which the happiness and the interests of mankind were (are) to be upheld, or whether we shall remain, as we have been during the last twenty years, under the necessity of maintaining a system of military policy; whether Europe shall in future present the spectacle of an assemblage of pacific or of armed nations. Shall the nations of the world take up arms to destroy each other, or lay them down to promote each other's happiness?"—*Lord Castlereagh, speech in the House of Lords, March, 1815* ("Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh," vol. i., p. 58).

"All Europe is not to be disturbed, great interests are not to be injured, the people are not to have fresh burdens imposed upon them, great social and commercial relations are not to be abruptly torn asunder, and all the greatest Powers of Europe are not to be united in arms for an insignificant result."—*Lord Clarendon on the Crimean War, June 19, 1854.*

"Peace cannot be had without concession and sacrifice. The statesmen of the world must plan for peace, and nations must adjust and accommodate their policy to it as they have planned for war and made ready for pitiless contest and rivalry."—*President Wilson, speech in the United States Senate, January 22, 1917.*

"Never mind what were *your* intentions; the question is, what were *their* thoughts, what were *their* inferences?"—*Mr. Disraeli, speech in the House of Commons on July 27, 1857, on British annexation policy in India before the Mutiny.*

IT has not been the writer's purpose in the preceding chapters to indulge in indiscriminate predictions and anticipations, but rather to state facts and weigh reasonable probabilities. That must of necessity be the attitude towards the peace settlement of all men who are too old for illusions, yet not too old for hopes. Still more will this be his purpose in approaching the final and most important part of his task—the consideration of the organization of the future peace of the world, a question so much more vital than all the

territorial readjustments which have ever been proposed, though necessarily bound up with this material aspect of the settlement.

This book has been written with an eye less for the present than the future—the future in which not merely the children of to-day, but their children and children's children, will live. For it is the interests of the generations now unborn that the peace-makers of the coming days will need to bear in mind, and everything that they may do will have importance and lasting value just in the measure that it is done from this standpoint, and so helps to create such a status and such international relationships as will protect Europe and the world against the recurrence of the disorder, demoralization, and disaster of the past three years.

Even assuming, therefore, that conditions of peace and reorganization reasonable in themselves, and tolerable to all the countries and races concerned, should be secured, the task of the Powers will still be incomplete. Peace is the cure of war, not its preventive, and simply to agree upon a just settlement and make no attempt to discover and apply measures to ensure its stability and permanence would be to leave a good work half done. The hopes and longings not merely of the war-weary nations, but of mankind at large, are centred upon a farther and a fairer goal. How far will it be possible to realize the dream of humanitarians in all ages, the co-operative organization of the nations for the purposes of peace?

It is not, perhaps, surprising that in this country, which has not as yet succeeded in devising a scheme for the federation of the Empire, many earnest minds are dubious of the practicability of so ambitious and far-reaching a design. Nevertheless, the attempt to realize it will have to be made, since by shirking it civilization and statesmanship, for which the year 1914 will to the end of time be a year of humiliation and disgrace, would still more proclaim their intellectual sterility and moral penury.

Before considering this question it seems necessary to

make the attempt to visualize the condition of Europe as it existed on the eve of the war. I have purposely deferred this attempt to the present stage of my argument, in order to bring into focus the special tasks that will fall to the Peace Congress and to the larger and more representative conference of the nations which may be convened with it, or at a later date, to deliberate upon the ulterior problem of world-peace in general.

We have by no means a monopoly in this country of heady writers, with cut-and-dried theories of the war and peace so complete and final as to rule out discussion of any kind. Germany, too, has an abundance of them, with a force of utterance peculiarly their own. There, as here, however, there are many moderate men who honestly wish to know the whole facts of the problems with which the Peace Congress will have to deal, and are convinced that no settlement can be real and durable which is not based upon a just appreciation of all the interests involved and does not make due allowance for every rightful point of view. It is our duty both to recognize and reciprocate this spirit, which, for example, finds expression in an article contributed recently by Dr. E. Daniels to the German review of which he is an editor, the *Preussische Jahrbücher*. I quote the following extract the more readily since the article (though accusing Great Britain of joint responsibility for the war) was intended to rebuke the Chauvinistic tendencies of the writer's countrymen :

Statesmanlike minds . . . will credit the English with an honest belief that their policy prior to the war was intended primarily to follow a prophylactic purpose, viz. the maintenance of their possessions, which they believed to be threatened by Germany. This belief of a German menace was a hallucination, but we are not justified in doubting its *bona fides*. Unless we make allowance for the enemy's order of ideas, unless we free ourselves from the hypocritical newspaper standpoint, according to which virtue and right are altogether on our side, and the wrong and crime on that of the enemy, no statesman will be able to sit at the table at which it will be the task of the negotiators to discover the bases of an assured peace (December, 1916).

To suggest that any similar discrimination should at the present time be shown in our attitude towards the enemy may seem like the veriest quixotry. Nevertheless, it will be hopeless to discuss conditions of settlement and projects of future peace unless we both understand and allow for the several standpoints of the nations with which we are at war. It is not easy for the average Englishman to put himself in the position of a "foreigner" and look at disputed questions from the "foreigner's" angle of vision; and perhaps to this limitation of outlook more than to any other cause is due the fact that we are often as a nation misunderstood and misjudged, and sometimes treated to harsh epithets which we feel to be wholly undeserved. If never before, however, the attempt to see things as others, and especially our enemies, see them is imperative. To do that does not mean that we should accept their opinions as a true representation of the facts.

By general consent the conditions of the settlement, whatever else they may do, are intended to ensure peace for the future. If so, they will need to take strict account of the political conditions which existed at the outbreak of war, in so far as these conditions can be held to have contributed to the catastrophe. To diagnose these conditions, therefore, before attempting to prescribe a remedy for them, is the first and most obvious task of any political pathology that can claim to be something more than mere quackery. Doctors will differ here as everywhere, but that certainty makes it only the more necessary to probe carefully the causes which had produced in the body politic of Europe the unhealthy and weakened condition which made it so easy a prey to the virus of war. Unless that is done there can be no hope of applying remedies that can be expected to do more than give a temporary relief.

Capital importance is no longer attributed to the tragedy of Serajevo, with its sequel the Austrian Ultimatum of July 23, 1914, with its time limit for compliance

of forty-eight hours,<sup>1</sup> for this tragedy is now generally regarded as the accidental occasion of the war rather than its cause—the chance spark that set ablaze a mass of combustible material which had been accumulating for years in all sorts of dangerous ways and places.

On the other hand, far greater importance than hitherto is now rightly attributed to the Teuto-Slavic question. For a long time the centre of gravity of the old antagonism between Germanism and Slavism had been shifted to the Balkans, and it had seemed fated that this region should be the centre of the next European conflagration. From the moment that Germany, throwing to the winds the reserve and caution which marked the Oriental policy of Bismarck, identified herself openly, and with increasing ostentation, with Austria's aggressive Balkan schemes, it was inevitable that the suspicion and hostility of Russia, as the traditional protector of the Slavic races, would be aroused. The annexation by Austria of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 and Germany's prompt warning to St. Petersburg that the act had her full support gave a fatal turn to Russia's relationships with the neighbouring empires.

It has of late been customary to picture Austria's conduct at that time as specially iniquitous. Certainly it stamped the Treaty of Berlin as a worthless "scrap of paper," but in reality the treaty had hardly been regarded before as anything else. It was not the first time it had been overridden with impunity, for in violation of its terms the two Bulgarias had amalgamated and Russia had made Batoum a closed port, while Great Britain, who had made herself responsible<sup>2</sup> for the good government and the protection of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte in Asia, had failed to adopt any effectual measures to that end.

<sup>1</sup> Count Mijatovich, the Serbian ex-Minister and ex-Ambassador, relates that Count Andrassy once gave him the advice, "Write to your Government that I have told you that diplomacy never uses menacing language unless the country it represents is ready to declare war in forty-eight hours" ("Memoirs of a Balkan Diplomatist," p. 20).

<sup>2</sup> By the Cyprus Convention of June 4, 1878.

Illegal and inopportune Austria's act was, yet it cannot be said to have greatly outraged the public conscience of Europe, which had received too many shocks of the kind to be greatly moved by another, and, moreover, most people in Western countries were of opinion that the more Turkish rule was curtailed the better it would be for humanity at large. It is also to be remembered that Austria had good reason to believe that the Young Turks were bent on claiming back these provinces, which she had occupied with strict right for thirty years, to complete union with the rest of the Ottoman Empire; already they had been invited to send delegates to the projected Turkish parliament. Her legal tenure threatened, she determined to place it beyond further dispute. It is possible, but not certain, that the other Great Powers, if placed in the same position, would have acted differently.

Weakened by her recent war with Japan, Russia was unable at the time to go beyond diplomatic protests. Serbia, however, which had long turned envious glances towards the annexed provinces, fearing now lest her natural desire for expansion should be thwarted and her dream of a federation of the Slavic races under her hegemony be shattered, would have taken up arms single-handed against the aggressor had not Russia restrained her. While from that time the rivalry between Russia and Austria in the Balkans became irreconcilable and implacable, Germany, by accepting full responsibility for her ally's policy of provocation, gave new life and meaning to the traditional Teuto-Slavic antagonism, which, after long smouldering, now burst suddenly into a glowing flame.

The formation of the Balkan League in 1912 seemed for a time to afford the hope that the allied States might work out their regeneration independently of their powerful neighbours. In the war of that year Turkey was, in fact, brought to her knees by a combined onslaught, the force of which took even the Great Powers by surprise. At the end of the first campaign Turkey's plight seemed desperate; the question between her and



the League was less how much territory she would be willing to concede to the victors, than how little would be left of the Ottoman Empire in Europe when the allies had completed the work of partition.

Turkey's destruction, however, was not as yet to the interest of Austria, still less to that of Germany, whose influence over her had for nearly twenty years been steadily growing, insomuch that the policy of the Porte was now no longer determined in Constantinople but in Berlin. Incited by Austria, Bulgaria broke away from the Balkan League and took the field again, now against her allies. Her defection met with a just reward; she received overwhelming defeat at the hands of Serbia and Greece, as a result of which she lost most of the gains which had been assigned to her by the Treaty of London which followed the first war. Turkey, on the other hand, was now able to retrieve her position somewhat, and so to emerge from the second ordeal still securely established in Europe, if with a greatly reduced dominion. The result of the two wars and of the final peace of Bucharest (August, 1913) was that Bulgaria, which had deserted the League, became the helpless vassal of Austria and Germany and more than ever a centre of intrigue, while Serbia, now greatly enlarged, definitely accepted the protection of Russia. The rest of the Balkan States, including the new principality of Albania, continued to move more or less in their own orbits.

For Austria the bitterest disappointment of the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913 was the new vitality which they had given to the Serbian national movement. Serbia had given to the world proof of an unexpected strength, had gained an important increase of territory, and therewith had greatly augmented her prestige amongst the kindred races. Uncertain whereunto this thing might grow, and more apprehensive than before for the continued cohesion of her polyethnic realm, Austria now concentrated her attention upon checkmating the ambitious little State which had dared to contest her own hegemony in the Balkans, even going to the length of

inviting Italy to join her in a war against Serbia before she had had time to recover from the recent struggles. Every hostile act aimed at Serbia, however, was a direct challenge to Serbia's protector, Russia. The German Government's exposition of the genesis of the present war, far from impartial in many things, is singularly candid in its admissions upon this point. For it frankly states that it was expected in Berlin that the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia would at once bring Russia upon the scene.

Between Great Britain and Germany likewise there existed a special source of friction in the naval rivalry which, though threatened directly the present Emperor came to the throne, took ominous form only after 1898, when the first German Navy Act was passed. Although the creation of a stronger fleet was originally commended to the nation purely as a measure of commercial security, it was not long before it was avowed as a necessary part of the Emperor's ambitious schemes of *Welt-politik*. Nevertheless, a considerable part of the population, represented chiefly by the commercial and working classes, was to the last honest in its disavowal of any idea of building ships as a challenge to British supremacy at sea. In Parliament this section of public opinion was specially represented by the Radical and Social Democratic parties. The latter party never ceased to oppose the Government's large-navy proposals, but gradually it found itself isolated, owing to the success in the country of the energetic agitation of the Navy League, the Pan-Germanists, and the imperialists generally.

It cannot be doubted that apprehension as to the ultimate objects of Germany's naval ambitions, as part of a restless foreign policy, caused the British nation to acquiesce more readily than it might otherwise have done in the departure from the traditional policy of abstention from Continental alliances and commitments which dated from 1904. The abandonment by Germany in 1890, soon after Bismarck's fall, of the secret reinsurance treaty which that statesman had concluded

in 1884 with Russia was the signal for a new grouping of the Powers. Almost immediately France and Russia entered into an intimate diplomatic *entente* which before 1895 had matured into a formal military alliance. In 1904, Great Britain and France, who had for nearly twenty years bickered and wrangled, mainly over the Egyptian question, without having the heart for a downright quarrel, adjusted all their outstanding foreign and colonial disputes by a series of give-and-take conventions. By one of these, the Anglo-French Declaration of April 8, 1904, to which were attached a series of secret articles which saw the light for the first time only seven years later, France withdrew all claims in relation to Egypt, while Great Britain in return gave to her a free hand in Morocco and promised her diplomatic support in whatever measures she might take with a view to strengthening her influence in that country. Germany offered to this agreement a determined opposition. How far this opposition was due to disappointment at seeing secret ambitions of her own forestalled and defeated is a question which was warmly discussed at the time. Her Chancellor and Foreign Minister denied both then and later that they had ever had any idea of advancing territorial claims in Morocco, while admitting that they looked for compensation elsewhere, and there seems no reason to doubt that this was the official attitude.

It is certain that Germany warmly resented the fact that the contracting Powers had come to terms without consulting her. Her old grievance, that she suffered from constriction, and that wherever she sought relief she found herself checkmated by Great Britain, was revived by this new rebuff, which convinced her that whatever was to be gained must be gained entirely on her own initiative and by her own efforts. That view is the only possible explanation of her aggressive attitude in all the later developments of the Morocco dispute: how far the view was justifiable is a question which it is not necessary for present purposes to consider. It is only fair to add that Germany, as a signatory to

the Madrid Convention of 1880, regulating the conditions of trading in and with Morocco, and as a Power in separate treaty relationships with that country, had a clear right to object, as she did at a later date, to the provision of the Anglo-French agreement under which France bound herself to maintain the existing commercial status in the shereefiate for twenty years only, after which she would have been free to follow her traditional colonial policy of the closed door. Owing to Germany's intervention this danger was averted.

Five years later Great Britain and Russia similarly came to a friendly understanding upon contentious questions relating to Persia and the Far East, with the result that this country came into the Franco-Russian combination, at first nominally as a sleeping partner, pledged only to give to her associates the benefit of her influence and advice, but before long accepting contingent liabilities of a larger kind. The late British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward (now Lord) Grey, has spoken of the Triple Entente as merely a "diplomatic group." Only in a formal sense can that definition be regarded as adequate. It is true, however, that the *entente* was no more an alliance than was the *rapport* of the German, Russian, and Austrian Emperors formed in 1872—as to which Gortchakoff rejoiced that nothing had been committed to paper—though that relationship was and still is called by the same name; and it is equally true that for a time, at any rate, the *entente* left Great Britain perfectly free to maintain a neutral attitude in the event of a Continental war.

The formation of the Triple Entente was interpreted in Germany, and rightly so, as a counter-stroke to the Triple Alliance, yet of this no Power had less cause to complain than the German Empire, which ever since its establishment had lived by alliances. At the same time, the Entente Powers were perfectly honest in their assurances that it was not intended to be either aggressive or provocative, and that hostility to Germany was no part of its purpose. In no country was this disavowal made more persistently or more sincerely than in Great

Britain, one of whose leading Ministers publicly declared at the time that the next development of the *entente* idea must be to "rope-in Germany." At a later date (1911) Lord Lansdowne, who, as British Foreign Secretary, negotiated the Conventions of 1904 with M. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London, stated in the House of Lords that "If the Government of that time (1904) had any one aspiration which they cherished particularly, it was that the agreement with France should be the precursor of other agreements with other Powers," and that "The whole policy of the late Government was quite inconsistent with the idea of coming to an agreement with France which should exclude the possibility of agreements with other Powers or which should divide other European Powers into hostile camps." It is significant also of public feeling in France that King Edward, as the assumed author of the Anglo-French and later accords, earned in that country the flattering name of "*le roi pacificateur*."

To say all this, however, is to say only half the truth. However pacific the motives behind the *entente* were, the essential fact to be allowed for is that Germany did not so regard them. On the contrary, she soon came to the conclusion that the *entente* was aimed directly against her, and that Great Britain in particular, by her policy of accords, was bent upon her "encirclement" and isolation. This fantastic idea undoubtedly derived encouragement from the whole-hearted manner in which the British Government fulfilled its pledge of support to France when Germany challenged the Morocco agreement in 1905 and throughout all the later stages of the ensuing controversy. The prevailing suspicion was exploited by the militarist and Pan-Germanist parties with great persistence and success, and it made easy the task of convincing their countrymen—more nervous and more liable to panic than any other people in Europe—that the country was in peril, and that only by the strengthening of its military and naval resources would it be secure against the designs of its enemies. If the reader is disposed to regard Germany's apprehensions at that time as exaggerated and

irrational, I shall be the first to agree with him. In endeavouring to understand the German standpoint, however, the question of how far it was justifiable is altogether irrelevant. The fact to be emphasized is that this was the situation as the Germans saw it ; if we did not recognize this fact before the war, it is of immense importance that we should do so now.

Nevertheless, after the peace mission of Lord Haldane to Berlin in February, 1912, it almost seemed that the strain upon Anglo-German relationships was becoming less tense, and that events were making, slowly but surely, for a revival of the lost confidence. Professor Hans Delbrück has recently hazarded the opinion that but for the war the reconciliation of Germany and Great Britain might have been effected in two years' time, and he mentions the belief, as current in some quarters in Germany, that, fearing this, the Russian Pan-Slavists did their best to precipitate the rupture.<sup>1</sup> I do not accept this hypothesis, but that it should be advanced at the present time is a fact of some significance. What may, perhaps, be accepted as true is that Germany was willing, and even eager, to enter into an official friendship with Great Britain on her own terms, with a view to diminishing the risk of complications in the event of war with Russia and France. That calculated interest was the motive of her policy towards this country is proved by the peace formula which the German Government vainly proposed for Lord Haldane's acceptance, for this formula would have bound the hands of Great Britain, pledged her to neutrality in circumstances which would have meant the desertion of her friends of the *entente*, and, while securing to Germany the advantages of her existing alliances, would have prevented this country from entering into future combinations of the kind.

It seems certain, however, that in 1913—hardly sooner—the German Emperor capitulated to the persistent pressure of the eager militarists by whom he was surrounded, accepted the pernicious doctrine of what is falsely called a “preventive war,” i.e. the doctrine that Germany

<sup>1</sup> *Preussische Jahrbücher*, November, 1916, p. 185.

if she believed war to be imminent, was justified in waging it at her convenience, and, as Frederick the Great said, looking for pretexts afterwards—a doctrine which even Bismarck, though no stickler for moral punctilios, vigorously reprobated—and decided to take the fate of his country and of Europe into his own hands. The passing of the great Defence Law of that year, providing for a huge increase in the peace strength and the immediate expenditure of an extraordinary vote of fifty million pounds on armaments—money which was, in fact, to a large extent expended even before it had been voted—cannot be viewed independently of the war which so soon followed.

To add to the causes of unrest which had existed for some years prior to 1914, the old agitation over the question of Alsace-Lorraine had been resumed in France with a vehemence which recalled the days of Déroulède. Never since the Boulanger episode was the newspaper feud between the two countries so bitter as during the years immediately following the conclusion of the Anglo-French agreement. Protected now by her intimate friendship with powerful land and sea Powers, France was no longer disposed to show the old patience under provocation, and in the exchange of recriminations which took place at that time her publicists and journalists gave at least as good as they received.

There were other causes of friction and disquiet, but those already mentioned were the most ominous. They are recalled not with any intention of weakening responsibility for the war where the world has already decided that it must rightly fall, but solely in order to throw light upon some of the foremost issues which the Peace Congress will have to face if its conclusions are to be practical and are to have lasting results. The overwhelming body of public opinion in neutral countries is in agreement with the allied nations in the conviction that if Germany—well prepared as she was by the Defence Law of 1913, and assured that no chance would ever again be so favourable to her—had not wished for war Europe would have been spared the

horrible carnage of the past three years. Yet agreement upon that question does not alter the fact that the conditions for a catastrophe had for some time existed in abundance, and that only wary and temporizing statecraft had so far succeeded in averting it. Estranged by mutual suspicions and jealousies, divided into rival groups which more and more tended to pull different ways, protesting a desire for peace but not sufficiently ensuing it, the leading nations of Europe had allowed the old concert of the Powers to go by the board, and some of them at least seemed to have capitulated to a fatalism which regarded war as almost inevitable.

Looking back upon the many controversies which obscured the European outlook four years ago, yet of which the full gravity was to be recognized too late for repair, it is natural to regard the resulting situation as altogether unique. Yet the total effect was not fundamentally different from many another critical conjuncture in European affairs during the past half-century. The difference was one of kind and degree. There was extreme and widespread friction, but friction somewhere and in some form there had generally been; there was an atmosphere of war, but so there had been on other occasions; what was unique was merely the fact that a normal condition of tension had at last reached the breaking-point.

To understand the political condition of Europe in 1914 is to understand, at least in its broad aspects, the catena of problems which will have to be taken into account before any progress can be made with the organization of the world's peace on a permanent basis. For the situation which existed at that time contained all the elements of discord, disturbance, and disruption which have menaced the concord of Europe time after time for generations, and will continue to menace it until the spirit of co-operation takes the place of rivalry as the basis of international relationships.

The path of political progress has for two centuries been strewn with the wreckage of schemes of universal



peace. Some of these schemes have been conceived on bold and ingenious, others on merely fantastical lines, yet all have been inspired by the profound moral earnestness of men who loved humanity far too well to accept war as the last word of civilization, or to doubt that "what began best can't end worst." French moral philosophers busied themselves with the noble theme at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the Abbé de Saint Pierre published in 1713 at Utrecht, as a sort of benediction upon the famous treaty of that year and town, his *projet de paix perpétuelle*, which greatly exercised French thought then and later. The Abbé had attended the conferences of the Powers at which the peace of Utrecht was negotiated, and the impressions he there formed appear to have convinced him that the nations had it in their own hands to abolish war if they chose. Some years later (1729) he developed his idea in more practical form, proposing the formation of a perpetual European League of Peace, to consist at first of nineteen Sovereigns and States.<sup>1</sup> The same idea appealed to Rousseau, who added it to his many proposals for the regeneration of society.

Early in the following century German idealists took up the tale, and in 1806 Kant published his famous book on "Perpetual Peace." He did not pronounce permanent peace impossible, but he saw no hope of it until absolute Governments—of which Germany was then full—were abolished. He proposed, therefore, that the nations should federate on a republican basis—by which he meant no more than a representative system—disband their standing armies, and cease to accumulate further debts. It was his hope that the organization would gradually grow until it comprised all the civilized peoples of the earth. Meantime, on the eve of the French Revolution, Jeremy Bentham had speculated upon the subject in England, though the plan which he drew up for a universal peace was left in a fragmentary state. One might say that the Revolution itself, perverted though its course became, was in essence a war to end war.

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Law of Nations," by Henry Wheaton, p. 261.

These and other men of like mind, however, were pathfinders rather than builders, and their efforts failed to bring the question within the grasp of practical politicians, though in England a Peace Society, which has since uninterruptedly carried on an active propagandism in this and other countries, was formed in the year following the final fall of Napoleon. It is noticeable, however, that behind the ardour of the German democratic party, which during the Napoleonic tyranny and later worked incessantly for the introduction of constitutionalism, was the sincere conviction that nations could only protect themselves against war by taking their affairs into their own hands. Not the French but the British Constitution was their ideal. In England, wrote Dahlmann, "are most purely developed and preserved the foundations of the Constitution towards which all new European nations are striving," while the poet Rückert, in an outburst of enthusiasm, sang :

O, build we now a temple  
On Albion's example !

Not without cause did England become for the reactionaries of Prussia from that time forward the hated symbol of political progress.

After a great war Europe has invariably talked about the need of a great peace :

When the devil was sick,  
The devil a saint would be.

It has been the moral reaction against a method of deciding international disputes which most people of normal mentality have always recognized as outrageous and indefensible, and so long as it has lasted such a protest has been quite sincere and genuine. But it has never lasted long :

When the devil was well,  
The devil a saint was he.

No sooner have the warring nations recovered from physical and financial strain than their high principles and virtuous resolutions have gone the way of the good seed which withered because it fell on stony ground.

The history of the Holy Alliance, formed just a hundred years ago, affords a good example of Europe's past unstable and fugitive convictions on the subject of war and peace. The idea originated with Czar Alexander I, one of the most inscrutable men who ever sat upon a throne. The historian Freeman once said that it would be "instructive if some development of science could enable us to look into the heart of a despot." Alexander on many occasions disclosed the inmost recesses of his mind with perfect candour. It was essentially the mind of a despot, who was on the whole a benevolent despot, a mind European in culture yet Asiatic in instincts. The impulses of this singular man were often erratic and his motives usually confused, but with all its limitations and obscurity his political philosophy was relieved by occasional flashes of rare insight and even genius worthy of an age more advanced than his own. If in the end Alexander abandoned the idea of progress as a delusion and a snare, and threw his influence altogether on the side of reaction, the liberalism of his earlier years will always stand to his credit.

The idea of the Holy Alliance appears to have been conceived, or at least to have taken concrete shape, while the monarch was under the religious influence of the Baroness von Krudener, a devout German lady who both undertook the task of his conversion and succeeded in it. In this union Russia was first joined by Prussia and Austria, and the treaty confirming it was unquestionably inspired by a lofty sentiment of fraternity and concord.

The Act of the Alliance, bearing the date September 26, 1815, declared that the allies had no other object than to publish in the face of the whole world their fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective States and in their political relations with every

other Government, to take as their sole guide "the precepts of that Holy Religion, viz. the precepts of Justice, Christian Charity, and Peace," to "remain united by the bonds of a true and indissoluble fraternity," and to lead their subjects and armies "in the same spirit of fraternity with which they were animated to protect religion, peace, and justice." All the States willing to accept these principles of action were warmly invited to join the Alliance, and the agreement was, in fact, signed by all European Sovereigns except the Prince Regent of Great Britain, whose Government endorsed Lord Castlereagh's suspicions that it meant more than it said; the Pope, who resented the idea of temporal rulers setting up as spiritual guides; and the Sultan of Turkey, who as an infidel disqualified himself for such Christian fellowship. The United States, though likewise invited to join, declined.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Castlereagh's suspicions proved to be well founded. In spite of its religious unction the Holy Alliance was merely part of Alexander's great design to induce the treaty Powers to enter into a mutual guarantee to defend the status of Europe as it had been created by the Congress of Vienna, while in the background was the intention that it should act as a check upon democratic advances and as a defence of the existing political systems against menace and change. Alexander revealed this intention with complete openness in the conferences of the Powers which were held at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 and Troppau in 1820. At the first of these conferences he proposed that the existing Quadruple Alliance of Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Great Britain should be continued as a measure of protection against France, but should be supplemented by a larger union, to consist of all the States which had submitted to the Treaties of Vienna, whose object should be a reciprocal guarantee of their territories and

<sup>1</sup> An excellent account of the peace movement in which Alexander played so prominent a part a hundred years ago is given in "The Confederation of Europe," by W. Allison Phillips, who has made a special study of the period.

sovereignties. Of this proposal Castlereagh wrote at the time :

The idea of an *Alliance solidaire*, by which each State shall be bound to support the state of succession, government, and possession within all other States from violence and attack, upon condition of receiving for itself a similar guarantee, must be understood as morally implying the previous establishment of such a system of general government as may secure and enforce upon all kings and nations an internal system of peace and justice. Till the mode of constructing such a system shall be devised, the consequence is inadmissible, as nothing would be more immoral or more prejudicial to the character of government generally than the idea that their force was collectively to be prostituted to the support of established power, without any consideration of the extent to which it was abused.

Similarly the preliminary protocol of the Troppau conference proposed to lay down the principle that

States which have undergone a change of government due to revolution, the results of which threaten other States, *ipso facto* cease to be members of the European Alliance, and remain excluded from it until their situation gives guarantees for legal order and stability. If, owing to such alterations, immediate danger threatens other States, the Powers bind themselves, by peaceful means, or if need be by arms, to bring back the guilty State into the bosom of the Great Alliance.

Russia, Austria, and Prussia had signed this document before it was even submitted to Great Britain and France. The British Government, however, refused to accept it, and under a scathing criticism of Lord Castlereagh it was modified.

Whatever their success in seeing Europe through a trying time of transition may have been, it cannot be said that the conferences and other negotiations between the Powers at that period, with the treaties and alliances which were their outcome, greatly advanced the cause of international peace. Of the great settlement arranged

at the Congress of Vienna a contemporary German publicist, Friedrich von Gentz, who had acted as secretary of the Congress, wrote pessimistically :

Men had promised themselves an all-embracing reform of the political system of Europe, guarantees for universal peace ; in one word, the return of the golden age. The Congress has resulted in nothing but restorations, which had already been effected by arms, agreements between the Great Powers of little value for the future balance and preservation of the peace of Europe, quite arbitrary alterations in the possessions of the smaller States ; but no act of a higher nature, no great measure for public order or for the general good, which might compensate humanity for its long sufferings or pacify it for the future.

The Sovereigns of the Continent wanted peace, but they still more wished to be protected against any disturbance of the newly established political and territorial status, for some of them so advantageous. No sooner, therefore, had the menace of Napoleon and France disappeared than they turned their weapons against democratic movements and aspirations as a no less obnoxious source of unrest and danger. The reorganization of the Continent was conceived in the spirit of reaction, and for a whole generation the principles associated with the name of Metternich governed the policies of the Courts and Governments of Russia, Austria, and Germany in their domestic relationships and in their relationships with each other. More and more after the issue of the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819 Eastern Europe, as represented by these Powers, and Western Europe, as represented by Great Britain and France, went apart, the former perpetuating the petrified formulas of autocracy, and the latter carrying forward the living doctrines of liberty and progress.

The first serious blow to the new public law of Europe, as established by the Congress of Vienna, was given by the members of the Holy Alliance themselves, for in 1846 Russia and Prussia allowed Austria to annex

Cracow and destroy its republican government. Within ten years more the three Powers were estranged by the Crimean War, and the Holy Alliance, which was to have established the dominion of morality upon earth, ceased to exist.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE ORGANIZATION OF PEACE—*continued*

"Our influence, if it is to be maintained abroad, must be secure in its sources of strength at home; and the sources of that strength are in the sympathy between the people and the Government, in the union of the public sentiment with the public counsels, in the reciprocal confidence and co-operation of the House of Commons and the Crown."—*Letter of Canning to the British Ambassador in Vienna, September 16, 1823.*

"I share with yourself the firm hope that the mischief may be greatly diminished, so long as a thorough understanding exists between France and England, and I will add, so long as this understanding has for its object the preservation of the peace of the world, and for every nation its rights and possessions, and the toning down of animosities which threaten to produce the greatest of all calamities, civil wars and the conflict of races. The blessing of Heaven will not fail to attend the accomplishment of a task so great and so holy."—*Queen Victoria to the Emperor Napoleon III, January 2, 1861.*

"It is extremely difficult for us who know nothing about foreign policy but what we see in the newspapers to form any accurate judgment as to what that foreign policy may be. . . . What is seen on the stage of foreign policy is but a small part of the whole. By far the greater portion is what takes place behind the scenes, and as we ordinary mortals are not admitted behind the scenes, not even to the door of the green-room, our knowledge of foreign policy must be based mainly on speculation."—*Lord Rosebery, at Glasgow, January 13, 1912.*

"What 'Europe' means is simply six Powers, who have received no commission to act in the name of their fellows, but who speak and act as if they were so commissioned, who expect their will to be obeyed, simply because they have the physical strength to make men obey it. . . . The despots and diplomatists to themselves seem sometimes really to think not only, what is true enough, that they have the power to make others obey them, but that others are in some way morally bound to obey them. They seem to think that their signature to a document binds by some legal force those who have never signed it or been consulted about it. . . . Over and over again in our fifty years (1837-1887) have we seen the wisdom and the will of 'Europe' give way to the higher wisdom, the stronger will of the nations for whom 'Europe' sought to lay down the law. We need not despair of hearing the word some day formally go forth that the nations are to be free to act for themselves."—*E. A. Freeman, "Fifty Years of European History," pp. 55, 56, 58.*



ONCE more Europe returns to the old problem of the organization of peace, but in a mood more urgent, more determined, yet also more chastened than ever before. What is hopeful in the outlook is the fact that in all countries there has sprung up a deep longing for a new start in international relationships, and a firm resolve that the present opportunity of making it shall not pass unimproved. It is one of the most welcome signs of the new spirit that more has been said and written in Germany during the last three years in favour of submitting international disputes to arbitration than during any three generations in the past. Hitherto in that country this question has been confused in the public mind with the pacifist movement in general; and weighted with the defects of that movement—and particularly its omission to pay due regard to the claims of nationality and patriotism—it has seldom been taken seriously. To-day not only are many of the best-known publicists of Germany, like Professor Hans Delbrück and Dr. F. Naumann, warmly commending the principles represented by the tribunal of The Hague, but the Imperial Chancellor has pledged the co-operation and support of the Government and the country to any endeavour to redeem Europe from the evil ways of the past. Speaking in the Imperial Diet on November 9, 1916, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg<sup>1</sup> said :

When, after the termination of the war, the world will fully recognize its horrible devastation of blood and treasure, then through all mankind will go the cry for peaceful agreements and understandings which will prevent, so far as is humanly possible, the return of such an immense catastrophe. This cry will be so strong and so justified that it must lead to a result. Germany will honourably co-operate in investigating every attempt to find a practical solution, and collaborate towards its possible realization, and that all the more if the war, as we confidently expect, produces political conditions which will do justice to the free development of all nations, small as well as great.

<sup>1</sup> Bethmann-Hollweg resigned on July 14, 1917, and was succeeded by Dr. Michaelis.

Looking back, it is discreditable and shaming to modern civilization and to morality that so little should hitherto have been achieved in this direction. The nations in general have waited until quite recent years before giving arbitration a trial, and the Peace Congresses of The Hague date only from 1899. The earlier efforts of the European Powers are chiefly of value as indicating what not to do or expect. They are vitiated because they belonged to a time when Europe was still completely under the domination of the doctrine of balance of power and the correlative system of alliances and groupings, of which the object may fairly be described as less to maintain peace, though that may have been an incidental result, than to provide that in the contingency of war a given group should not be at too great an advantage. But by general assent the organization of peace cannot be obtained, and must not be sought, on those lines. Here the allied, enemy, and neutral nations are all agreed.

Obviously the most vital condition of the success of any concerted action by the Powers for the prevention of wars in future is that the anterior settlement which it will be their duty to watch, and if necessary to defend, shall itself be successful. It would not be legitimate to use any organization or machinery which they may create as an instrument for guaranteeing permanence to territorial arrangements for which no sanction in justice or expediency could be claimed, and to which at the very outset the peoples affected had protested, for stereotyping existing political conditions, and for protecting Europe not merely against violent changes, but against natural development and orderly progress. That was the fallacy which underlay the Holy Alliance and all the inchoate schemes of Czar Alexander I for combining the States of Europe in a sort of mutual insurance company with unlimited liability, and it was the reason why Great Britain in particular refused to have anything to do with them.

The Powers which in the settlement negotiations had succeeded in gaining all they wanted would naturally

wish to have the new status confirmed, and the more surely this could be done the better satisfied they would be. This standpoint was consistently adopted by German writers on the peace conditions so long as there seemed a possibility that the war would end in a manner favourable to their expectations. Thus Professor Hans Delbrück wrote in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* for November, 1916 :

We may assume that this war will create in Europe conditions and frontiers which will for a long time prove of value and deserve to be given legal security. From the German standpoint, in particular, and the more as we hope that the war will end with good results for us, there will be no disposition to object to these results being confirmed by international law. On the contrary, we can only rejoice if the other nations share the same wishes as our own.

But this natural attitude implies its counterpart, which is that those States which emerged from a Peace Congress accepting under duress conditions which they held to be essentially unjust would be unwilling to bind themselves and would regard all such arrangements as provisional and transitory. No doubt it was his recognition of this possible stumbling-block in the way of after-war co-operation between the Powers that led President Wilson, when proposing his "universal covenant," to contemplate the conclusion of a "just and sure" peace in which there should be no victors and no vanquished, a peace leaving behind it no humiliations and no galling memories. "The treaties and agreements," he said in his speech to the American Senate on January 22, 1917, "must embody terms that will create a peace that is worth guaranteeing and preserving . . . not merely a peace that will serve the several interests and immediate aims of the nations engaged."

All sorts of suggestions have been made in this and other countries as to the form which an international organization for peace should take, from a World Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, larger in scope, more authoritative and more automatic in action than that of

The Hague, to a formal Confederation of States. Nevertheless, it may be doubted whether the civilized world or even Europe alone is as yet ready for any large limitation of the principle of State independence. It may be taken for granted that the existing facilities for arbitration will be largely extended, but beyond this it may be found that for the present the best that can be expected will be the creation of a more genuine and more comprehensive Concert of the Powers, no longer confined to the half-dozen States which have hitherto arrogated the right to control the destinies of half the world, but comprising all the nations of both hemispheres which are willing to be associates in the cause of international concord.

To be effective for its purpose this wider Concert would nevertheless need at least a legislative assembly and an executive, together with laws and covenants, in the form of treaties, affording the necessary bond of fidelity. It would be the object of these laws and covenants not merely to define the aims to be pursued, but to impose upon the associated sovereign States in certain clearly defined directions the limits of their independent relationships with each other. For example, it would be contrary to the purpose and spirit of such a Concert that any of its members should be at liberty to enter into external agreements in conflict with its pacific aims as formally accepted by them. The prohibition of alliances and diplomatic groups, such as those which have, owing to the war, become the dread of Europe, would obviously be incumbent upon any such organization of the nations and an essential condition of its very existence.

The necessary legislative assembly might be provided by superseding the periodical *ad hoc* Congresses of the European and other States, called for special purposes, by a standing Congress for all purposes. Such a Congress of States, as the Parliament of the Nations, should meet at regular intervals. The Congresses of the past have usually been emergency—sometimes panic—Congresses, convened in order to deal, under the most un-

favourable conditions possible, with problems which have already entered an acute stage of danger or of difficulty. Not infrequently they have come together too late to be able to do more than record their impotence and failure. It would be the duty of this standing Congress of the future to exercise a continuous survey of international politics and relationships, with a view not merely to adjusting the differences which will inevitably continue to occur from time to time, but by exercising foresight and, where needed, conciliatory influence, to prevent petty questions from developing into large problems and trivial frictions from engendering serious antagonisms.

The Congress of States would be composed of delegates of the Parliaments of all the nations represented, elected by their members upon a proportional representation principle, with a view to giving a voice to important minorities. Election might be for the duration of each parliament concerned, an arrangement which would secure for the Congress continuity of existence. Active members of the diplomatic service should be ineligible for membership. I have spoken of the assembly of the States as legislative, but it is doubtful whether for a long time it would be empowered to decide questions on its own initiative with binding effect upon the affiliated Governments. It is probable that at first the delegates would have to act by mandate, and that all their resolutions would need to be ratified by the various Parliaments. Great are the uses of advertisement in modern times, and it would be a pity if the Congress of States were to hide its light perpetually under a bushel, either at The Hague or elsewhere. Perhaps by arranging to hold its sessions occasionally in different capitals its purposes and work would be brought home to the world, and made a part of its life, more effectively than by any other means.

It would probably be found that, for a time at least, the agencies of the Peace Conference at The Hague, developed according to need, would provide the necessary executive organization. Yet too much attention should not for the present be expended upon the unnecessary multiplication of mere mechanism. After all, what Europe

and the world chiefly need is' not elaborate peace machinery so much as a genuine peace spirit and instinct, and without these the most philosophically devised international organization conceivable would be only a piece of diplomatic frippery of little practical value.

The idea that it can be within the power of such a Congress of States summarily to adjust all open questions left over by the Peace Congress and, so to speak, clean the European slate once for all, handing forward no difficulties to the future, would be comforting if it were practicable, which it is not. Perhaps no better service can be done at the present moment to the cause which every nation and every right-minded individual have at heart than to utter an urgent warning both against inordinate expectations and the temptation to imprudent haste. The desire of the ardent friends of peace for an imposing international organization, armed with large powers, which shall at once enter upon its functions, and make up by superheated energy for the supineness and lethargy of the past, is natural. Nevertheless, one of the gravest dangers to be feared is that of forcing the pace unduly and endeavouring to induce the nations and their Governments into measures for which they are not ready. Such a course could only end in disappointment, and it might even compromise the peace movement and retard it indefinitely.

To press the combatant nations in particular to commit themselves immediately to radical changes and departures so long as the fever of war is still upon them would be like persuading drunken men to sign the temperance pledge. They might agree to do it, but they might also be unwilling or unable to keep their word. Those arrangements will prove most lasting which are entered into soberly and with full deliberation. Here, again, the middle way of moderation will be the way of prudence and safety. Even so thoughtful a man as President Wilson, speculating in an environment which has little in common with that in which the lot of European statesmen is cast, has seemed more than once to exemplify the disposition of ardent friends of peace to overload

the international *entente* which it is hoped to call into existence.

Assuming the institution of a permanent Congress of States, it is possible that for a long time the best work which it will be able to do will be to endeavour to create a *communis consensus* of the associated nations in regard to certain principles of public policy the adoption of which would seem to be a condition of any genuine and substantial progress towards international solidarity. Some of these principles may now be briefly mentioned.

1. *The Public Law of Nations.*—First of all, the authority of and respect for the public law of nations will need to be reinforced. It reads like a romance, yet more than a hundred years ago a King of Prussia subscribed to the preamble of the Treaty of Kalisch (February 28, 1813), declaring, "The time will come when treaties shall be more than truces, when it will again be possible for them to be observed with that religious faith, that sacred inviolability, on which depend the reputation, the strength, and the preservation of empires." Two generations later (1870) the most distinguished of English idealists, Mr. Gladstone, said that "The greatest triumph of our time will be the enthronement of the idea of public right as the governing idea of European politics." Nearly fifty years later still we have seen Germany, which is only Prussia enlarged, unblushingly trample her own treaties underfoot in sheer lust of power and aggression. The reaffirmation of the sanctity of international contracts and the majesty of the public law must be the starting-point for all fruitful later efforts.

But the Congress of States will need to go beyond this: the war has reopened the entire question of international law, bringing to light the necessity for a careful revision of some existing principles and usages, as well as for extensions in directions hitherto overlooked. It will be the business of the Congress to give to this complex and disputable question the prompt and exhaustive consideration which it deserves, remembering that its own

existence, *raison d'être*, and promise of usefulness are altogether dependent upon the success which attends the initial part of its labours. For unless "the idea of public right" is to be in truth and sincerity "the governing idea" not only in European but in world politics, the organization of the nations for peace will prove an empty dream.

2. *The Settlement of International Disputes.*—A tribunal charged with the specific functions of conciliation and arbitration would exist side by side with the Congress of States. The tribunal of The Hague has already done good work in so far as it has been allowed, and it should be developed to meet larger needs. Every affiliated State would be bound by treaty to submit all disputes with other affiliated States or with States not represented in the Congress (subject in this case to mutual assent) to the tribunal sitting as a court of arbitration, or first to seek amicable mediation and thereafter, in the event of failure, to submit to formal arbitration. The tribunal would be composed of members of the Congress of States and of distinguished jurists, chosen from a panel, to act as assessors, probably without votes. The members of the Congress would have to be a small body, and serious difference of opinion would inevitably arise as to the States which should be eligible for representation. Should the tribunal represent only the larger Powers? But a body so composed would in present conditions be useless for its purpose, since it would merely repeat in another form the existing antagonisms. As well hand the peace of the world into the hands of a dozen or a score of the same statesmen and diplomatists who failed to keep Europe out of war in July, 1914. On the other hand, an excessive representation of small States might, without safeguards as to voting power, tend to encourage intrigue by throwing the Great Powers on critical occasions unduly upon the support of their dependents and *protégés*, as was the case when Austria and Prussia were still struggling for primacy in the Diet of the Germanic Federation.



In spite of this risk, however, the line of greatest safety might appear to lie in the establishment of the tribunal on the widest basis consistent with its purpose and with practical efficiency. In choosing both the lay and legal members it may be found wise to give representation not directly to individual nations, but to ethnical groups, e.g. Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Latin, Slavonic, and Oriental.

The more diverse in composition the tribunal can be made, the greater will be the hope of excluding intrigue and sectional considerations from its midst, and the greater the possibility that its decisions will be characterized by impartiality and even-handed justice. That, with the existing strength of national sentiment and prejudices, there can be a guarantee of absolute impartiality, whatever the safeguards that may be employed, can hardly be expected. This possible defect, however, is one of the risks inseparable from an experiment of the kind, and it will have to be taken in the interest of the important issues involved. There are even publicists in Germany who are prepared to face it at the present time. Although admitting that "Germany is the most unpopular of all Powers," and in consequence has most to fear from prejudice in any international tribunal of the kind, Professor Hans Delbrück writes: "Apprehension of any disadvantages of that kind should be set against the political disadvantage which would accrue to Germany if in the future peace negotiations she adopted an attitude of hostility towards the idea of arbitration."

Happily there is no disagreement anywhere as to the necessity for a wider application of the machinery of conciliation and arbitration than has been given to it in the past, and with the terrible memory of the present war before them it is not likely that the Powers will allow to the old pedantic objections, based upon exaggerated notions of national independence, the old force. The stock argument against international peace tribunals of every kind, that they involve an unjustifiable infringement of the rights of sovereign States to determine their disputes, and in the last instance to defend their honour

in their own way, without outside interference, will never be entirely abandoned. It is, nevertheless, one to which the world will be likely to listen with growing impatience. It is inconceivable that mankind will permanently tolerate the anarchical claim that States shall be entitled to decide disputes by brute force regardless of reason and right, and with complete indifference to the welfare of entirely disinterested nations. In the time of the old civil faction feuds the contestants fought out their differences in the open streets, caring nothing that the lives and property of innocent non-combatants suffered in the general *mêlée*. Warfare between nations is only a survival of that crude and elementary method of proving one's superiority to one's neighbours. If it be claimed that the right of self-defence is inherent in nationality, it does not follow that two nations, in asserting their supposed interests, are justified in involving other nations in loss and disaster. At most it justifies them in having their pound of flesh, but no more. The right of self-defence in the case of individual nations involves, in fact, as its correlative the right of all nations collectively to insist, by force if need be, that their interests shall not suffer in consequence, which is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the argument for war.

Some German theorists on the question, while willing to give pacificism a fair trial, fear that the hope of removing or even seriously diminishing international rivalries and jealousies by the method of arbitration is bound to disappointment. But the history of their own country refutes this objection. Before the formation in 1867 of the North German Confederation, as a first step to the establishment of the Empire, the German States were perpetually at loggerheads; their interests were believed to be entirely irreconcilable; and the jealousy with which the smaller States regarded each other was only equalled by the apprehension with which they all regarded Prussia. The union in which were merged first the States north of the Main, and later those of the south, was as much an organization for the maintenance of peace between communities which had hitherto been quarrelsome neighbours as for mutual defence against foreign enemies,

The States found when they came together that the interests which they had in common were more numerous and more vital than those which divided them ; even the old racial antipathies were softened ; and the tribal spirit gave way more and more to a larger spirit of nationality. Partial though such an analogy is, there is every reason to anticipate the same results from the organization of the nations for the purposes of peace, subject only to the paramount condition that the anterior settlement shall be one which leaves behind it as little animosity as possible, and enlists the interests of all the States concerned in maintaining the new status which it creates.

Difficult and delicate questions are involved in the problem of the executive power and the enforcement of decisions. There are three conceivable ways in which the tribunal might endeavour to secure compliance with its judgments. One is by appeal to public opinion, which in this case would be the opinion of the world, the method upon which the tribunal of The Hague now relies. A second line of defence against contumacy would be to exercise pressure in virtue of a common agreement between the Powers to suspend diplomatic and economic intercourse with the disputants, or either of them, which refused to accept the ruling of the court. The rupture of diplomatic relationships alone would hardly be likely to carry force with States which by their action had already shown so little respect for the opinion of their associates. An economic boycott, if applied effectively, and with the full co-operation of all the allied States, would be a different matter. It might be expected that even the threat of such a form of pressure would have a sobering influence on public opinion in the refractory country and marshal the forces of reason and moderation in support of a conciliatory policy. The obvious disadvantage of such a weapon is that its injury would not be confined to the offending States, though cordial co-operation between the Powers by pooling resources might greatly mitigate the inconvenience and loss inflicted upon individual countries.

Finally, there is the application of military force, the *ultima ratio* which every combination of States holds in reserve for use against its unruly members, whether that combination consists of pure autocracies, like the States of the old Germanic Federation, of modified autocracies like the present German Empire, or of democracies like the American Union. President Wilson is already prepared for the creation of a "concert of power" which would make war impossible by sheer superiority of numbers.<sup>1</sup> Sooner or later, no doubt, we shall reach a stage of international solidarity in which the resources of all nations will be pledged to the suppression of aggression and even of wanton disturbance of the peace by any one of their number, but at the present time of nervousness, irritation, and suspicion, when every nation has its hand upon its sword, it would seem to be altogether premature to talk of any proposal of the kind.

There could be no objection to the decisions of the tribunal being declared final and obligatory in certain classes of disputes, e.g. money and frontier disputes, but even here the tribunal would have to rely altogether on moral suasion—on the implied obligation of the disputant States to respect the impartial judgment of a court created with their co-operation, and carrying their authority, and on the force of public opinion. Whether the States would, in fact, agree to accept and act upon the decisions promulgated would depend in every case, first, upon the States implicated and then upon the issues at stake. It is justifiable to assume that only in the happily rare disputes in which questions of national honour—which usually means no more than empty diplomatic etiquette—are involved would the pacific endeavours of such a tribunal as is suggested prove futile. Nevertheless, with the deepening public conviction of the essential

<sup>1</sup> "It will be absolutely necessary that a force be created as a guarantor of the permanency of the settlement so much greater than the force of any nation now engaged or any alliance hitherto formed or projected, that no nation, no probable combination of nations, could face or withstand it. If the peace presently to be made is to endure, it must be a peace made secure by the organized major force of mankind" (speech in the United States Senate, January 21, 1917).

immorality of war, the growing impatience of the nations with methods of diplomacy in foreign affairs which often fall below the standard of current private morality, and their determination to wrest the direction of these affairs from the hands which have so long held them with jealous tenacity, it may be hoped that even disputes of honour will before long prove as amenable to pacific adjustment as disputes over African frontiers or unpaid national debts.

Not the least valuable service which the tribunal would render to the cause of peace would be the postponement of action which its proceedings would impose upon the disputants. It would be a condition of its formation that all members of the Congress of States should pledge themselves not to go to war in any circumstances without first submitting their disputes to its decision, and not merely awaiting its judgment, but allowing a further time to elapse for renewed negotiations and for public opinion to express itself. Even the postponement of the choice between peace and war would be of itself an immense gain, for the delay would give opportunity for that quiet and deliberate reflection which has noticeably been so often wanting in the great wars of the past. History will record, to the wonder and horror of coming generations, how in July, 1914, five European nations, after negotiations between their Governments lasting only twelve days, over a crime which was not a month old, were plunged into a war which lasted for over three years,<sup>1</sup> cost millions of lives, brought Europe into bankruptcy, and demoralized the affairs and relations of the whole world.

While, therefore, the tribunal of the Congress of States might for a time have to rely for success upon moral auxiliaries, representing the world's collective conscience rather than its collective power, there is no reason to assume that its influence would prove impotent even in those disputes which in the past have been least open to outside mediation. Simply because the tribunal would be set up voluntarily and of good-will, and its success

<sup>1</sup> At the time of reading the proofs of this chapter the newspapers record that the war has lasted "Three years and sixty-one days."

depend upon the fidelity of the associated nations and Governments to each other, its decisions, though resting entirely on moral force, should prove the more binding. Even the idea of fining a State which omitted to fulfil the duty of submitting a dispute to arbitration seems mischievous, for it might encourage the notion that the payment of the prescribed penalty condoned its fault. In such a manner there can be no alternative to honour but proclaimed dishonour, and Governments and nations must trust each other altogether or not at all.

3. *Interference in Internal Affairs.*—To what extent, if at all, and on what pretexts would the Congress of States be entitled to intervene in the domestic affairs of the affiliated countries where constitutional or other political causes created internal unrest or friction with neighbouring countries? The question is asked because it has been anxiously discussed by German writers. Germans in general do not love the constitutional systems under which they are at present governed, but they would appear to love even less the prospect of these systems being abolished as a result of outside interference or pressure.

“Questions of political rights and systems,” says Dr. F. Naumann, voicing the German attitude, “must be our own affair, and outsiders—even a ‘universal covenant’—have nothing to do with them: all internal politics must be the private business of our nation.” The general proposition thus stated must be conceded, and in no countries is it likely to be less contested than in Great Britain and America. The occasion of the present war was the claim of one State to interfere in the internal affairs of another, on the pretext that its Government encouraged conspiracy against the integrity and security of a neighbouring territory. Before Serbia was invaded, Europe, with the exception of the Central Powers, forgetting at once her past sullied record, had warmly taken her side, on the ground that the sovereignty of the smallest State is as sacred as that of the largest.

Whatever changes, therefore, the interests of future peace may seem to necessitate in the constitutional arrangements of any of the combatant countries must be made, or at least agreed upon, before the Congress of States is formed and receives its mandate. Great Britain has already anticipated the wisdom of adapting her electoral system to the higher order of citizenship which may be expected to be one of the moral gains of the war. Russia has overthrown autocracy and accepted a system of democratic government, the very thoroughness of which may possibly prove its greatest danger. A promise has likewise been given to the people of Prussia that their persistent demand for a more real share in the management of internal affairs shall be conceded to them, though the Emperor-King's proposal to postpone action until the close of the war recalls memories of the perfidy of Frederick William III after 1815 which may discourage undue expectations.<sup>1</sup>

Europe, however, is specially concerned with the German Empire and its constitutional system. Failure to introduce democratic principles there, at a time so critical for the future of civilization, would bode ill for Germany's future relationships with her neighbours and for her repute with the world at large. The reform needful for the Empire as a whole is one that will emancipate it altogether from the illegitimate and mischievous influence of Prussia in its political life, and that will be possible only when the nation passes under genuine parliamentary government and so obtains full control over its Ministers, foreign policy, and military machine. It has dawned upon the Germans themselves that what is wrong with their country is its monstrous political system. "It is a mistake," wrote the Radical journal the *Berliner Tageblatt* in April, 1917, "to think that a good foreign policy is possible in a country where the edifice of State is so different from that of the rest of the world, and which allows an atmosphere of suspicion to exist between it and other countries." Nations, if

<sup>1</sup> Since this chapter was written the King, yielding to outside pressure, has instructed his Government to prepare the necessary bills without delay.

left to themselves, will not go to war ; most wars have occurred because the true sentiments of the combatant peoples towards each other have failed to find expression, or have asserted themselves too late. Few people who know how powerless the German people are to control their own national affairs will refuse to endorse the words of President Wilson, in his speech to Congress on April 2, 1917 :

It was not upon their impulse that their Government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old unhappy days, when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties, or little groups of ambitious men, who were accustomed to use their fellow-men as pawns and tools. Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbour States with spies or set in course an intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which would give them an opportunity to strike and make a conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked only under cover where no one has a right to ask questions. . . . They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs. A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by the partnership of democratic nations.

The organization of the nations for peace will succeed in proportion as the future Parliament of the Nations is established upon democratic foundations and is made truly representative of the associated peoples. Its utility and serious purpose would be incalculably diminished if there should be admitted to it delegates who represented merely the arbitrary opinions and wills of more or less autocratic rulers. Autocracy and democracy seldom pull well together in political life. The alliance concluded more than twenty years ago between Russia and France seems to prove the contrary, but in reality it is the exception which emphasizes the rule. That alliance was welded by necessity—the necessity that two isolated nations should join hands in order to stave off menace



from a common source—and popular though it was for that reason, it remained for the two nations until 1914 a marriage of convenience rather than a real union of hearts. It remains true that democratic peoples do not yoke well with unbelievers in the doctrines of political liberty. The difficulty in the way of sincere and cordial international co-operation in the service of peace has been greatly weakened in Europe, in so far as it was due to antagonism of political conditions, by the sudden and dramatic transition of Russia to complete parliamentary government. Germany's acceptance of the same system of government would bring all Europe into line.

4. *Alliances and Diplomatic Groups*.—Nevertheless, the reorganization and extension of the existing mediatory machinery will be only one—and by no means the longest—*étape* in the way to the goal of permanent peace. However wide the functions which may be assigned to it on paper, the future Congress of States itself will not afford a guarantee that the provocative policies and principles which have in the past so largely alienated European Governments will be abandoned. Phrases like “balance of power” and “equilibrium” suggest the cause, direct or indirect, of most of the great political and military struggles of Europe for more than a century. For balance of power has really meant in practice overbalance of power on one side; it has meant alliances and counter-alliances, with large and ever larger armies and navies to support them; and the certainty that the relative strength of the rival groups would at the end remain much as it was at the beginning. Writing at the time of the Crimean War, Cobden said :

We talk of this as a war which affects the interests of all Europe, and we hear the phrases “balance of power” and “international law” frequently repeated, as though we were enforcing the edicts of some constituted authority. For a century and a half we have been fighting, with occasional intermissions, for the balance of power, but I do not remember that it has ever been made the subject of peaceful diplomacy,

with a view to the organization of the whole of Europe. Now, if such a pact or federation of the States of Europe as is implied by the phrase "balance of power" or "international law" should ever be framed, it must be the work of peace and not of war.<sup>1</sup>

Just fifty years ago John Bright was congratulating his countrymen that the doctrine of the balance of power, which he described as a "foul idol, fouler than any heathen tribes ever worshipped," had been found out and discredited. Yet it still dominates the political or at least the diplomatic thought of Europe, and is the corner-stone of British foreign policy; nor can there be any hope of its abandonment until frank and loyal co-operation between nations takes the place of jealous rivalry. That will only be possible, however, if at the end of the war a status is created which it will be to the interest of all nations to respect and maintain. If, therefore, this sinister phrase of such ill omen is in the near future to lose its fascination, everything will depend upon the spirit in which the nations, combatants and neutrals alike, come together after the war. The portents are favourable and the promises reassuring. Here the leading spokesmen of Great Britain, Germany, and the United States have avowed a common purpose. Defining in his speech at Dublin on September 25, 1914, the implications of the idea of public right, Mr. Asquith said:

It means finally, or it ought to mean, perhaps by a slow and gradual process, the substitution for force, for the clashing of competing ambitions, for groupings and alliances and a precarious equipose—the substitution for all these things of a real European partnership based on the recognition of equal right and established and enforced by the common will.

The German Chancellor accepted the same standpoint when, in the speech already referred to, he said:

The first condition for the development of international relations by means of an arbitration court and the peaceful liquidation of conflicting antagonisms would be that henceforth

<sup>1</sup> "Political Writings" ("What Next—and Next?"), vol. ii., p. 205.

no aggressive coalitions should be formed. Germany is ready, at all times, to join the union of peoples, and even to place herself at the head of such a union, which will restrain the disturber of peace.

Finally, the following words of President Wilson may well be accepted as voicing the sentiments of neutral States, since they were uttered before America entered the war as the auxiliary of the Allied Powers :

The question upon which the whole future peace and policy of the world depends is this : Is the present a struggle for a just and secure peace or only for a new balance of power ? If it be only a struggle for a new balance of power, who will guarantee, who can guarantee, the stable equilibrium of the new arrangement ? Only a tranquil Europe can be a stable Europe. There must be, not a balance of power, but a community of power ; not organized rivalries, but an organized common peace.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of the ideal here set forth should not blind us to the difficulties in the way of its attainment. The alliances and diplomatic combinations, innocent in purpose but provocative in effect, which have for the last fifty years obsessed the statesmanship of Europe are a symptom rather than a primary cause of danger, and the true evil lies behind—in past unforgotten acts of injustice, fears of retaliation, antagonism of interests, conflicting ambitions, imperialistic and commercial rivalries, and the frictions and animosities to which these things give rise. To remove these causes of division and discord, however, is to solve the whole problem of permanent peace.

5. *Commerce and the "Open Door."*—It is reasonable to hope that more will be done by international agreement than has been possible hitherto to diminish the dangers to peace due to commercial rivalries. International exchange has not hitherto proved the complete pacificator and conciliator which the Free Trade school of the Mid-Victorian age predicted that it would be.

<sup>1</sup> Speech in the United States Senate, January 22, 1917.

Richard Cobden spoke of Free Trade as "the international law of the Almighty." The thought that international peace would come by trade and not otherwise, and hence that everything that obstructed trade darkened the prospects of that great cause, runs through all the great tribune's speeches and writings. Hence arose his jealous attitude towards Governments and Government action, as irksome necessities, to be endured only under tacit protest and restricted to the narrowest limits compatible with order and security. "As little intercourse as possible between the Governments," he wrote, "as much connection as possible between the nations of the world." With the increase of competition in the markets of the world, the growing pressure of population upon space in the highly developed industrial countries of Europe, and the rapid appropriation by civilized nations of the last remaining parts of the now misnamed Dark Continent, commercial competition has more and more become a source of contention.

There remains still, however, a hope of abating the antagonism arising in imperialistic and commercial rivalries, and it is the wider adoption of the policy of the "Open door." Already this policy, the authorship of which is one of the proudest and most enlightened achievements of British statecraft, has made great headway both in Asia and Africa, and its formal recognition has proved a mollifying influence which has eased not a few territorial disputes in recent years—witness the regulation of the Congo region in 1885, the opening up of China and Persia, and latterly the Franco-German agreement relating to Morocco. The application of this principle upon a still larger scale and, as a preliminary thereto, its formal endorsement by the Congress of States, might do much to alleviate colonial rivalries, and even to assist Germany to bear with a more philosophical spirit than she has for a long time shown the untoward fate which compelled her to concentrate her attention upon internal concerns while the world was being divided amongst more vigorous and prescient claimants. Reference has been made in preceding

chapters to the desirability of constituting certain ports now part of the Turkish Empire, particularly Constantinople, Adrianople, Smyrna, and other places in the Levant, free commercial ports, and it may be that the same principle could be applied on a larger scale than hitherto in other parts of the world.

6. *The Reduction of Armaments.*—Great expectations would appear to be based on the prospect of a general reduction of armaments. As a measure of internal economy such a step is greatly to be welcomed, but it will only promote the cause of peace if it is preceded or accompanied by the removal of the underlying causes which have hitherto encouraged European nations to indulge the passion for military extravagance. In other words, relief from the pressure of armaments will be obtained just to the extent that the coming peace is a peace by consent; if it is an arbitrarily imposed and forced peace, the more will the existing animosities be perpetuated and even deepened, and the nations be compelled by their own short-sightedness to devote the respite—be it short or long—which peace would give them to preparations for a renewed struggle. Moreover, however favourable the nations might be to a large and immediate measure of disarmament, the difficulties in the way are enormous. If to-day there were to be a *plébiscite* of the nations of Europe on the plain question, Do you agree to a measure of disarmament? who doubts that the answer would be a universal affirmative? Who doubts any less, however, that as soon as disarmament came to be defined and reduced to practical terms no two nations would be found of the same mind? The discovery of a formula universally acceptable would be only the first obstacle.

Still more difficult would be agreement upon an equitable basis and ratio of calculation. Should the basis be area of territory? Then Russia (taking her European empire only) might have an army ten times as large as that of Germany. Should the basis be population? Such a principle would place France in

a position of hopeless inferiority as compared with her Eastern neighbour. Should the principle be extent of frontier or, in the case of a maritime country, of frontier and seaboard? Such a principle, again, would unduly favour territorial bulk. Should colonial empires be counted in ascertaining the ratio of armies to area? Russia does not distinguish between home and foreign empire; there is only one Russian Empire, whether her rule be in Europe or Asia. In order that she might not have an unfair military advantage over those colonial Powers which make the distinction, it is obvious that the same principle of territorial unity would have to apply all round in fixing the fighting strength permissible. Here the effect would be to assign to Great Britain a larger potential army than she might be willing to maintain, while the German army would be far inferior to that of France.

Or, to take another ratio altogether, should the basis be expenditure, and if so, expenditure on what—on the army only or the army and navy together? Moreover, even expenditure would need to be proportionate to something—but to what? Once more the alternatives of area and population suggest themselves, while a new set of considerations—such as relative national wealth, the relative cost per unit, whether a soldier or a sailor, a barracks or a battleship, the extent to which the army contained volunteers, and so forth—would enter into the calculations, complicating the problem still further.

Furthermore, would the restrictions upon the size of an army apply only to its peace strength? If so, what guarantee would there be of equitable dealing? When Napoleon compelled Prussia to reduce her standing army to small proportions, Scharnhorst all the more quickly passed his men from the line into the reserve, so that Prussia became stronger, instead of weaker, for she became literally a nation trained to arms. However low the peace strength of an army might be fixed, the essential point is the strength of the effective force that could be put in the field in a given emergency. While faithfully observing in form any restrictions which might

be adopted by mutual agreement, a State would still be able to train its citizens to the exercise of arms without enrolling them in cadres or publishing the fact in Army Lists. The purpose might be attained by a system of physico-military drill, beginning in the primary and finishing in the continuation and night schools.

If, however, the difficulties in the way of a general basis and ratio of disarmament seem almost insuperable, it should be possible to arrange an effective measure of the kind by some differential method, such as grouping the Powers for the purpose, the degree of disarmament varying for each group. Such a grouping would be determined by such considerations as area and population, contiguity, natural frontiers, and above all, the existence or absence of special sources of antagonism.

When in this way, however, all that is possible has been done to relieve the nations from the pressure of excessive military and naval burdens, the fact will remain that these burdens are a symptom far more than a cause of danger. Nations are not quarrelsome because they have large armies, but create large armies because they are quarrelsome. Provocative foreign policies, aggressive alliances and defiant groups, territorial ambitions, commercial jealousies—these things are far more dangerous than the "bloated armaments" of which Disraeli spoke more than half a century ago,<sup>1</sup> for they give to large armies their justification and to ambitious soldiers their chance. Even Bismarck, in the unmuzzled days of his retirement, admitted the difficulty of keeping the "Militärs" in order. One incidental result of a measure of disarmament might be counted on with certainty; in proportion to its genuineness it would make it difficult or impossible for bellicose Governments to rush into hostilities without deliberation or warning. In other words, if nations wish for peace they should not be prepared, but unprepared, for war.

Upon one phase of the armament question there will be little difference of opinion in any country: the supply

<sup>1</sup> Speech in the House of Commons, May 8, 1862.

of the munitions of war should cease to be a private interest and a source of private gain. The idea of private individuals being pecuniarily interested, even indirectly, in the multiplication of armaments will one day be regarded as not less opposed to right feeling than the idea of making profit out of the housing of the dead. Meantime, the revelations of the way in which German and other armament firms have been in the habit of organizing influence and touting for business in all sorts of underhand ways, such as the cultivation of intimate relationships with the defensive departments of State, and, in the case of Krupp, practising gross bribery, should alone discredit once for all a system under which the production of instruments of destruction is an attractive business investment. As soon as normal conditions have returned our own Government should endeavour to restrict to the utmost the practice of private contracting for war material. The common objection that if the State ceased to purchase from private sources it would be impossible to adjust supply and demand might be met by some adaption of the system of "controlled firms" which has played so large a part in the production of munitions during the present war.

*7. Parliamentary Control of Foreign Affairs.*—Another principle for which it will be the duty of a Congress of States to make from the first a firm stand is that of the right and duty of all legislative assemblies to assume full control of, as they now have to bear full responsibility for, foreign policy. To this end foreign affairs and relationships will need to be removed from the atmosphere of secrecy and undue reserve in which they are shrouded at present and brought into the free air and light of parliamentary life. In this country this is a demand which, at least in principle, is no longer contested. Representative leaders of all parties have in recent years strongly urged its necessity and pointed out the incompatibility with democratic conceptions of government of a system which gives to the assembly of the nation no part in determining relation-



ships and dealings with foreign States, while imposing upon it full responsibility for all that is done in its name. The contradiction is even more flagrant to-day than when John Bright used to expose it. "When you come to our foreign policy," he told a Glasgow audience in December, 1858, "you are no longer Englishmen, you are no longer free; you are recommended not to inquire. If you do, you are told you cannot understand it; you are snubbed, you are hustled aside. We are told that the matter is too deep for common understanding like ours—that there is a great mystery about it!" More than half a century later another member for Birmingham, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, had still to confess (October 22, 1914):

I do not know why it is, but in this, the most democratic of countries, our people have been told less of foreign politics—of the relations of one State to another and of our relations to them all—than has been the custom in all great Continental nations, even in those in which Parliaments and the mass of voters do not have, as they have here, complete control of the policy of the country. It has been a tradition not affecting one party only . . . a tradition handed down from older days when less depended on the voice of the people, and, as I think, not suited to the circumstances of to-day.

Parliament still continues, for practical purposes, without a direct voice in foreign affairs; it may discuss, but it has no hand in directing them; momentous acts like the conclusion of treaties are done without its sanction being asked beforehand. It is a reflection that may well give a democratic nation pause that just as war was declared by this country by the decision of the Executive, without consulting the Parliament of the nation, so will peace be concluded and the future tribunal of the peoples for the maintenance of peace be created in the same way. Every public department except one is engaged in administering laws and policies to which Parliament has at one time or another given its sanction; the department which administers foreign affairs does not work by laws, and it makes its own policies. If it is true, as has been said, that the British Parliament is

the worst informed in Europe on foreign affairs, the reproach lies with a system which makes so little provision for its enlightenment. Great Britain in this matter by no means shines in comparison with other important countries. Some of these have devised arrangements by which a Government can to a large extent share its responsibility for foreign policy with Parliament without prejudice to the public interest or to foreign relationships. This purpose is served in France by a Foreign Affairs and a Colonial Affairs Committee, in Germany by the Budget Committee, and in the United States by two Foreign Affairs Committees, one of the House of Representatives and the other of the Senate. To none of these useful media of communication between Government and Parliament has this country as yet a counterpart.

German Liberal politicians are at the present time vigorously protesting that the foreign policy and diplomacy of their country have hitherto been too dynastic, too much a matter of friendly relationships between crowned heads. But the defect of British foreign policy and diplomacy is not that they are too dynastic, or dynastic at all, but rather that they are too Ministerial, too much an affair of Cabinets or even inner circles of Cabinets, too little parliamentary, and not at all national in the sense of proceeding from a direct mandate from the people.

It is obvious that, the world and human nature being as they are, it is impossible to conduct all foreign affairs in the full light of day, yet between the extremes of complete publicity and complete secrecy good-will would assuredly be able to discover a safe compromise which would satisfy all reasonable expectations. Speaking on this subject in the House of Commons on March 19, 1886, Mr. Gladstone said :

The present system cannot possibly be defended as an ideal system. That is to say, we cannot say that in any instance the maximum of security is afforded to the country against either its going wrong or being betrayed into acts which, whether right or wrong, are acts of which it has no cognizance and on which it has had no opportunity of bringing its judgment.

Discussing in the House of Commons on May 29, 1913, not unsympathetically, a proposal to bring foreign affairs more into the light of day and under the control of Parliament, Sir Edward (Lord) Grey pleaded that if the House wished to make an experiment in exercising administrative control over a public department, the experiment should not be made in the first instance with the Foreign Office. Administrative control in the ordinary sense of the word is here neither desirable nor possible. It is, however, expedient that a branch of the public service which now is less subject to parliamentary influence than any other, which creates and maintains its own traditions, and which is for practical purposes a law to itself and a State within the State, shall be adjusted to the principle which underlies every other branch of government, that it is the unconditional right of Parliament to determine national policy and that the duty of a department of State, whether high or low, begins and ends with the execution of that policy.

8. *Public Instruction on Foreign Affairs.*—Much more might be done to create a closer *rapport* in foreign affairs between Government, Parliament, and nation if greater care were taken to increase the sources of public information. Upon practical and above all upon moral questions the instinct of the British nation—the product of centuries of political education and of indebtedness to religious conceptions which have laid stress upon conduct—is almost always sure and correct. But a nation's instincts alone, however sound they may be on the whole, are not a sufficient guide in high affairs of State, and in foreign affairs least of all. There knowledge and the balance of mind which knowledge ought to give are the special needs. Yet much as is done for the enlightenment of the people upon political questions in general—by literature, journalism, and platform exposition—the domain of foreign politics has been so systematically ignored that upon this subject the mind of the average man of the middle and working classes is a blank or, where the knowledge gained is just sufficient to be a

danger to the possessor and to others, worse than a blank.

However great the public indifference to foreign questions may have been in the past, it will be impossible that it can so continue in the future. War, the great educator, has discovered for the millions of the nation new countries, peoples, and civilizations; it has also made known to all of us the peoples of our great dependencies, and us to them, as never in the past. The intermingling of nations and races in the intimate comradeship of the bivouac and the battlefield, in toil and sacrifice, privation and suffering, in the emulations of heroism and mutual service, will prove to have destroyed for ever our old national insularity of outlook. The men of our returning armies will look out upon the world with new eyes and an awakened curiosity and intelligence, and in the coming days they will want to know more about the people with whom and for whom they have been fighting—the French and the Russians, the Italians and the Serbs; and even about the enemy nations which they have done their best to decimate. The problems of the settlement and of future peace will also have for them an interest and actuality which they will possess for no others, and these are in substance foreign problems.

All these are reasons why in the future far more pains will need to be taken to encourage and develop a healthy and well-informed public opinion on foreign affairs. These men have been acquiring knowledge in the hardest school and under the severest preceptor known to mankind, and it will now be a grateful country's duty to help them to carry their new education farther in after-life. Private effort can and will do much, but still more can be done, at least to promote exact knowledge, by a freer and more frequent discussion of foreign questions in Parliament. Foreign politics have come to be regarded as esoteric and sacrosanct only because of the tradition that they are the business of diplomacy and not of the nation at large. It is a false and mischievous tradition, and we may hope that its destruction will be one of the gains of the present war.

Amongst other measures which might be adopted by Parliament, for its own greater enlightenment as well as that of the nation at large, is the publication by the Government of two yearly digests, one of foreign and the other of colonial affairs. No ordinary or extraordinary citizen can be expected either to wade through or purchase the numberless separate reports of all kinds which are issued every year by the Foreign and Colonial Offices, and for the average man the bulk of the information they contain is of little practical value. What is needed is a yearly survey of foreign and colonial questions in their broad outlines. The Digest of Foreign Affairs, for example, would summarize the Government's transactions and relations with foreign Powers during the preceding year; it would review the work of the diplomatic service, giving a selection of or excerpts from the diplomatic reports and despatches which are now pigeon-holed for the instruction of later generations (how immensely valuable, to take a single instance, would have been at the present time a collection of such documents, which one must assume to exist in great number, bearing on Germany's war designs in recent years and her preparations for the final *coup*); it would contain a record and *précis* of treaties and agreements of all kinds concluded or renewed with foreign Governments during the year; and perhaps an exposition of developments in other countries with which we are in close relationships. The Digest of Colonial Affairs would follow substantially the same lines. Such publications, offered to the public at something less than the usual moderate price of official publications—an unbusinesslike transaction, perhaps, but one which, from the standpoint of public education, would be altogether justifiable—might play an important part in the future task of our "educating our masters" in a branch of political knowledge which hitherto has been far too neglected in this country by even the better educated classes.

9. *Secret Diplomacy and Secret Treaties.*—A further principle which a Congress of States would uphold and

press on the associated Governments and Parliaments is the cultivation of greater openness in diplomatic relationships and transactions. It is not the result of accident or ignorant prejudice that the words "diplomacy" and "diplomatic" have come to bear in the idiom of common life a sinister meaning, as conveying the suggestion of disingenuousness, of half-truths, ambiguities, equivocations, of something kept back or represented in a false or half-light. To the extent that this prejudice is justified diplomacy is itself to blame, and nothing short of the abandonment of the methods of obscurity will rehabilitate it in public esteem. The objections to excessive secrecy in diplomacy apply in particular to political treaties.

Bismarck, who is a convenient scapegoat for most things that are objectionable in contemporary statecraft, is often credited with having given to this form of diplomacy a new lease of life. It is true that he concluded not a few secret treaties and agreements in the course of his career—one of the first of his public acts was the Polish convention with Russia of January, 1863, the objects but not the terms of which were published at the time—but while he did much else to lower the tone of international politics, he left the practice of secret diplomacy much as he had found it; and in this branch of his education at least Louis Napoleon could have given him some helpful lessons. Great Britain herself, however, has here nothing to be proud of. The memories of the secret treaties with Russia and Turkey in 1878 and the secret articles of the Anglo-French treaty concerning Morocco of 1904 do not entitle us to preach to other nations, but are rather a call that we should sit in sackcloth upon our own special heap of ashes. Few indeed are the countries which, through their rulers and Governments, have not in the same way been guilty of surreptitious dealings in the past.

Taught by sad experience, nations will more and more demand complete candour between their Parliamentary Executives; they will no longer tolerate a system under which Governments are able to conclude territorial bargains of vast moment behind the back of other inter-

ested Governments, with which they are supposed to be on friendly terms, and enter into clandestine alliances which, under innocent-sounding names, commit them to incalculable liabilities without either their assent or their knowledge. In private life no sensible individual would enter into a civil contract without fully understanding its terms and implications, yet millions of individuals collectively are constantly being committed in all countries to international contracts of the most momentous character without either being allowed to read them or even to know that they have been concluded. Here, again, even the public opinion of Germany, in general so little disposed to assert itself, is urgent in demanding that diplomacy should make a new start. "The day is past for dynastic treaties in which the Parliaments have no say," writes Dr. F. Naumann in his review *Die Hilfe* (October 12, 1916). "After the experiences of the world-war no one will believe in treaties which have not, so to speak, been countersigned by the nations themselves."

It ought to be a rule of the Constitution in every country—and it should be the business of a Congress of States to see that the change is made—that no treaty or contract of any kind with a foreign State shall be concluded without the prior knowledge of Parliament and a full disclosure of the liabilities which it will impose upon the nations concerned. It follows that no obligations to another Power should be incurred which are not expressly defined and documented: it must in future be impossible to spring upon a nation unknown responsibilities, due to verbal arrangements, or held to be implications of formal agreements, though never before admitted to be such. The German and Austro-Hungarian Parliaments and nations, for example, never heard of the reinsurance treaty, which Bismarck concluded behind the back of the Austrian Emperor in 1884 until ten years later, when he revealed its existence in pique that his successor had allowed it to lapse. The secret articles of the Anglo-French and Franco-Spanish Agreements of 1904 relating to Morocco and Egypt were not known

to the world at large until a Paris newspaper divulged them in 1911. Blank cheques are unknown except in political life, and they are nowhere more out of place than there.

Further, all treaties should be of limited duration, which should be strictly defined, leaving them to be prolonged thereafter or terminated according to the will of the contracting nations, which would in this way have an opportunity of reconsidering their terms in the light of experience and possibly of new conditions. The idea of pledging the unknown future in matters which, in their very nature, are liable to constant and even sudden change is neither businesslike nor safe. In concluding treaties of arbitration for the maintenance of peace, Governments already take care not to commit themselves longer than a few years—the period is five in the treaties which exist between Great Britain and the United States and Germany. Such a stipulation is of infinitely greater importance in the case of treaties or commitments of any kind which may contemplate the contingency of war.

In passing, attention may here be drawn to one of several excellent principles introduced in the Congo Act of February 26, 1885. Article 34, cap. vi, of that treaty stipulates that "Any Power which in future annexes a territory on the coast of the African mainland lying outside of its existing possessions or which, being hitherto without possessions of the kind, should acquire the same, as also any Power which takes over a protectorate there, shall simultaneously notify such act to the other signatory Powers, in order to enable them if necessary to appeal against the same." It would be an excellent thing if this principle were, in a more extended form, applied to territorial acquisitions generally.

10. *The Mechanism of Diplomacy.*—It must be obvious also that if Europe is to be emancipated from the system of political thought which has so long dominated it there will need to be evoked both a type and a mechanism of statesmanship and diplomacy fundamentally different from those which have served it in the past. The



diplomatist, as he reveals himself from time to time in memoirs and reflections, is concerned with Sovereigns and Courts, with Ministers and the little social circle by which his "corps" is circumscribed. How little he heeds—how little he is expected to heed—the larger, the real world outside this small periphery ; in particular, how little he knows of public opinion, the quintessence of the million minds that make up a nation's true life !

New principles and new departures call for new methods and often for new men. There is a real danger that the representatives of the existing school of European diplomacy would bring to the tasks of the coming time merely the order of ideas in which that diplomacy has lived and moved for generations. How could they be expected to elude their traditions, even if they were willing, or could conceive of others as possible? Perhaps the best service which the diplomacy of the past can render to the future would be to act as a guiding-post, pointing out the paths which should not be taken.

So far as this country is concerned the great need would seem to be that de-classing of the diplomatic career and its opening to talent and merit pure and simple which Lord Robert Cecil seemed to adumbrate in his answer to a question on the subject in the House of Commons on July 4, 1917. Every one will remember John Bright's satirical definition of diplomacy: "We have a great many lords engaged in what they call diplomacy. We have a lord in Paris, we have another in Madrid, another in Berlin, another in Vienna, and another lord in Constantinople ; we have another at Washington—in fact, almost all over the world." <sup>1</sup> No one nowadays rails at lords because they are lords : the occupation is as obsolete as bull-baiting, and was never more intelligent. Nevertheless, who can deny that the more diplomacy comes down amongst the people, the more surely will it establish itself in confidence and esteem? The present formal divorce between diplomacy and democracy is for the good of neither. We have done with dynastic foreign politics : the end of the

<sup>1</sup> Speech at Glasgow, December, 1858.

dynastic principle in diplomacy is also due. It should be a humiliating thought for a nation which believes itself to be democratic and democratically governed that a plain Mr. James Bryce would have been impossible as ambassador to any one of the three most important monarchical Courts of the Continent.

Who can doubt that the unfortunate tradition which sanctions such a contradiction has played into the hands of Continental autocracy and, in Germany and Austria-Hungary at least, has strengthened its resistance to every attempt to bring diplomacy under parliamentary control. An arrangement by which Great Britain for a time sent the ablest of her aristocratic diplomatists to republican or democratic Courts and gave to the Courts of Germany and Austria-Hungary—to take or reject at will—only untitled men of the people might have an excellent influence all round. That, however, and all other questions affecting the mechanism of diplomacy must be left for the politicians to thrash out.

Nevertheless, the idea that aristocracy, whether of birth or intellect, and democracy are in some way natural antagonists is fallacious and the result of shallow thought. In the truest sense they are complementary, and in public life particularly each has need of the special qualities of the other; the strength of the one lying pre-eminently in the region of reason and in its instinct for safety, the strength of the other in its generous emotions and its instinct for justice. In relation to foreign politics in particular, both have much to learn and to unlearn, for both suffer from the defects of their virtues, aristocracy from a too cold and critical attitude towards other nations, democracy from a too ready disposition to make itself responsible for the happiness and good government of all mankind, while often forgetting matters at home more urgently needing its attention. A proper equipoise between these two extremes would create an almost ideal political mentality.

Before this subject is left it is worth while to mention a fact which will probably surprise most readers of these pages. It is the fact that down to August, 1914, Great

Britain went to the trouble and expense of maintaining diplomatic representation, actually or informally, at no fewer than eleven separate German Courts. When the Empire was established the right of receiving independent embassies was reserved to the Sovereigns of the middle States, and this country humoured their vanity accordingly. Hence, in addition to the British Ambassador to the Imperial Court in Berlin, there have ever since been Ministers Resident in the capitals of Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Saxony, and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha; there have been *chargés d'affaires* in the capitals of Baden and Hesse; and the Ambassador in Berlin has acted as Minister Plenipotentiary to five other Courts. The independent legations have required four separate diplomatic officials, with their staffs, and appear to have entailed the expenditure on salaries of £4,000 a year. Inexpensive though these special embassies have been financially, however, they should be too dear for the dignity of this country for the future. The practice of rewarding good for evil can be carried to excess, even by Christian nations, and to most people a single representative of the British Crown in Germany will appear sufficient after the war.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE WORLD'S HOPE

'England's mission, duty, and interest is to put herself at the head of the diffusion of civilization and the attainment of liberty.'—*Lord John Russell, September 5, 1847.*

"I find that the protection of which States stand in need is the application of moral remedies chiefly."—*Letter of Baron Stockmar (January 27, 1850), quoted in "Memoirs," vol. ii., p. 390.*

"I am desirous that the standard of our material strength shall be highly and justly estimated by the other nations of Christendom; but I believe it to be of still more vital consequence that we should stand high in their estimation as the lovers of truth, of honour, and of openness in all our proceedings, as those who know how to cast aside the motives of a narrow selfishness and give scope to considerations of broad and lofty principle. I value our insular position, but I dread the day when we shall be reduced to a moral insularity."—*Mr. Gladstone, House of Commons, July 30, 1878 (on the proceedings of the Berlin Congress).*

"Let us not forget that our history will ultimately be submitted to the judgment of a tribunal over which Englishmen will exercise no influence beyond that which is derived from the truth and justice of their cause, and from whose decision there will be no appeal. I allude to the collective wisdom and moral sense of future generations of men."—*Richard Cobden, "Political Writings," vol. i., p. 368.*

"The growth of European civilization is solely due to the progress of knowledge, and the progress of knowledge depends on the use of truths which the human intellect discovers and on the extent to which they are diffused."—*Buckle, "History of Civilization."*

"Civilization will have taken one of its most enormous strides when the citizens of each nation do not shrink from the duty of doing justice to the better mind of every other."—*John (Lord) Morley, "Life of Cobden," vol. ii., p. 139.*

"Great men have been among us, hands that penned  
And tongues that uttered wisdom, better none . . .  
They knew how genuine glory was put on;  
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone  
In splendour; what strength was, that would not bend  
But in magnanimous meekness."

*Wordsworth, Sonnet, "London, 1802."*

WHAT, then, may be hoped from the world's new-born passion for peace? Something substantial assuredly, if not, perhaps, for a time at least, all that the most ardent pacifist would desire. Yet those who do not pitch their immediate expectations too high should not be thoughtlessly accused of lukewarmness or pessimism. Perhaps by their very restraint they best prove that they are in earnest, and that their objects are practical. It is not pessimism to face the hard facts of life and experience in a sober spirit, free from illusions and extravagant hopes; and bearing in mind the slight advance which mankind, owing to perverse notions of public right and wrong and to an exaggerated national egoism, has made hitherto on the road towards universal peace, it would be unjustifiable, nay, even dangerous, to indulge the belief that the world is on the eve of an epochal moral transformation, which will make the future as different from the past as light from darkness. Human progress has never come in that sudden way, and never will so come.

A millennium and a half ago the Hebrew nation, in the midst of its wars and tumults, had the same visions of perennial concord, and it voiced its aspirations in prophecy, proverb, and song. We have not advanced much farther, if at all, towards the goal which so long ago it sought and failed to reach; for still peace does not flow like a river, nor does the wolf house together with the lamb.

Yet we dare not doubt the future, for doubt is the subtle accomplice of failure. Even if, looking to recent events, it be true that the war has inflicted upon the world unexampled horrors, let us not forget that the causes and principles for which the Allies have been fighting for the three most gruesome years of history, have evoked a sympathetic response and a moral uplifting throughout the world which are likewise without parallel. Certainly the war has shattered many cherished beliefs. No one could have foreseen that Germany would deliberately tear in pieces a treaty which, as no other, had for three-quarters of a century been the emblem of international faith in Europe, for the only

reason that it stood in the way of the realization of her military designs, or have conceived as possible the outrages by which the same country has since marked its contempt for the written and unwritten laws of warfare, the dictates of morality, and the claims of common humanity. Those who wish to visit upon Germany severe retaliatory measures point with force to these facts, and tell us that such and no less punishment must be inflicted in the interest of civilization, so that it may never again be menaced from the same quarter.

Nevertheless, one may be justified in doubting whether civilization has really suffered—I believe that it will rather prove to have been immeasurably advanced—by Germany's conduct both at the beginning of the war and later. If she has been guilty of callous illegality and inhumanity, there has been a noble resurgence of moral feeling throughout the world which will outlast the present conflict and be a permanent gain to mankind. The greatest friend of liberty has ever been the tyrant; the truest friend of morality has been the libertine, whether political or social, who has ostentatiously trodden morality underfoot. Short-sighted and faint-hearted observers of passing events have said that Germany by her actions has put back the clock of civilization, when all she has done has been to tamper with the minute hand. Adjustments of mechanism will be needful, and these it will be the business of the Peace Congress to make, but there is no change in the time of day.

Those who argue in this way make the mistake of judging the standard of international morality by Germany's crimes, instead of the world's abhorrence of them. The impressive manifestations of that abhorrence are the true and convincing measure of the world's moral advance. A century or a century and a half ago to break a treaty or bludgeon a people was accounted part of the day's work of ambitious rulers, whose prowess was valued by the number of their annexations as that of savage chiefs by the number of their scalps.

Frederick II of Prussia was a miser in moral principles, and stole territory right and left, yet an admiring posterity has called him "the Great." Napoleon laid a ruthless hand upon half Europe, and so long as he succeeded half Europe courted him :

And monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,  
And thank'd him for a throne.<sup>1</sup>

In those days half the outrages committed by Germany on land and sea in the present war would at best have drawn from onlooking neutral nations a shrug of the shoulders and a complaisant "*À la guerre comme à la guerre!*" The true significance of the revulsion against Germany's misdeeds is not the military alliance against her of six European nations, but the moral alliance against her of all mankind. Against that alliance Germany has from the beginning fought a losing battle; she will never again try conclusions with so invincible an antagonist.

And if some illusions have been dispelled, that is not altogether a matter for regret. Europe has been compelled to look at herself as she really is—to take stock of her civilization, to revise the standards of her public morality in many directions, to examine the quality of her statecraft and diplomacy, and to weigh in the balance a host of traditions, dogmas, and shibboleths to which her Governments have for generations clung with a blind, unquestioning faith. In all of these things much has been found wanting, and the mere recognition of that fact is a solid gain. Europe was on the wrong path—her statesmen everywhere are saying so daily—and was going more and more astray. The nations, whose life has been so cruelly seared and ravaged by the war, have paid an awful penalty for their blundering; it is for them to see that the penalty has not been paid in vain.

Meantime, it is probable that, whether victors or vanquished, they will emerge from the ordeal sobered,

<sup>1</sup> Byron, "Ode from the French."

discontented, impatient with a hundred things in their political life which hitherto they tolerated with easy unconcern; and in the resentment and revulsion which will come with reflection men will be apt to mete blame for the war indiscriminately—to fix responsibility solely upon politics and institutions, or even to regard themselves as the innocent victims of a foul conspiracy of ambitious Sovereigns and designing statesmen, instead of asking themselves honestly whether in the past they have ever raised a finger to help the cause of international peace or are doing so now. One may hear daily such a remark as this: "X. has been a Conservative all his life, but the war has made him a republican." The truth probably is that X. has never hitherto been anything at all by conviction, and that the unaccustomed effort of thinking for himself has momentarily bewildered him and unbalanced his judgment. "*On est toujours le réactionnaire de quelque chose*," said once a shrewd Continental statesman, and to fly from one extreme to the other is the most obvious way of proving that when the rest of the world is in ferment we ourselves are not unperturbed.

Nevertheless, even behind such expressions of political emotionalism, and still more behind the quiet equanimity with which serious men and women are turning their eager gaze to the future, there is a sincere and stern resolve that what has happened of late must never happen again. The world wants rest: it longs for peace. For half a century the nations have been struggling for territories, building up mighty empires, creating great armies and navies, pursuing the glittering bubble of prestige, and the jubilee has brought them not rejoicing and laughter, but sorrow and tears. Mankind is weary of the talk of super-men, super-souls, and super-States, and does not believe in any one of them. It wishes only to free itself from the domination of unhealthy political extravagances, restless ambitions, and aggressive adventures, and to settle down to a saner, quieter, humaner existence, in which civilization may have a chance to flourish and simple men and women,



who form the vast majority of the human race, to make the most of their short and unobtrusive lives.

We shall all be pacifists when the war is over. Yet if success is to crown the prevailing ardour for peace in this, perhaps the greatest crisis in human history, if the new era to which we are looking forward is to be a fair and not a monstrous birth, a grave obligation rests upon nations and individuals alike. It is that both shall make the most of every opportunity for reinforcing the peace spirit as it is manifesting itself in every part of the world. What is needed is that in every country the peace spirit and will of the individual citizens shall be welded into a mighty collective spirit and will. It has been suggested how Governments and statesmen may help, by endeavouring to remove the outward causes which have hitherto engendered international jealousy and discord, yet, much as they can do, when they have done their best there will remain beyond their reach and influence those deeper springs of national conduct and action which lie in human instincts and impulses.

Universal peace will not come by mere argument, by the pressure of a group of States and Governments upon its restless members, by any brilliant achievement of statecraft, or by external influences of any kind, but only by a transformation of the spiritual and political conceptions of nations and of the individuals who compose them. It will come just in proportion as reason and justice overbear and control the elementary instincts which lead nations to confuse might with right, and statesmen agree to enforce in public relationships and acts the moral standards which already they regard as binding in private dealings.<sup>1</sup> The bedrock fact of the

<sup>1</sup> I take the following passage from the "Recollections" of Sir Horace Rumbold, some time British ambassador at Vienna, published in 1903: "He (Sir Hamilton Seymour) held somewhat obsolete views as to there being but one code of honour for both public and private transactions. He believed in the sanctity of international obligations and the policy of enforcing them. He was incapable, I fear, of sympathizing with the more advanced public opinion which condones the breach of treaty engagements and warns defaulters off a racecourse" ("Recollections of a Diplomatist," vol. i., pp. 243, 244).

entire peace movement is this, that only a new and greater idealism will be able to redeem mankind from the errors and crimes which have so often fouled and blighted the fruits of civilization in the past.

We are still far from a consummation so devoutly to be wished. Ideals cannot be forced upon either nations or individuals; they must be learned by long and painful effort. Ideals are the theorems of the higher mathematics of life, and they who would master the theorems must first grind at the rudiments. Hence the condition of all genuine progress towards a co-operative spirit of peace must be the ethical education and elevation of society. Personal morality has made great strides: public morality has not emerged from the pagan stage of development. Yet there is no justification for despondency. Mankind is still in childhood and at school, and in that fact lies the surest ground of confidence. If it were really a grown-up, what a great, hopeless dunce it would be!

This needed ethical renewal will come—slowly, it may be—because it is a work in which all men can help; it is pre-eminently a common task for common men and women. It is a false view that the great moral gains of the past have been due to victorious warriors, or eloquent statesmen, or even of wise philosophers expert in all mysteries and all knowledge. Rather they have been achieved by the meek and lowly ones of the earth—the upright men and women of simple virtues who have helped forward the right by living it, never compromising with principle, never putting interest or expediency before honour and duty, or tolerating the vicious doctrine that what is morally wrong may be politically right. These are the mighty forces behind the great push, often retarded, but never altogether brought to a standstill, which is carrying mankind slowly but surely forward towards the far goal of its desire.

Nations will need in the coming days to revise, conscientiously and boldly, many of their inherited concep-

tions, and not least their conceptions of nationalism. It is not the fact of nationality, but the exaggerated claims which are put forward in its name that are at fault. At its best nationalism is only an extension of the family spirit, and as the family spirit, even in its highest developments, is perfectly compatible with a large degree of social community, so in a truly moralized society the national spirit will cease to be a source of external disharmony.

At its best or worst, however, nationalism will never disappear so long as seas and mountains, hot suns and boreal blasts, language and religion divide mankind, nor would its disappearance necessarily be a gain. In its broader aspects nationalism is only the principle of specialization applied to the largest and most important of sciences, civilization, and the contributions which it has made to that science are valuable beyond estimate. Its services to human progress will in future be greater and richer, however, the more in every country it ceases to be identified with a crude egoism and a spirit of aggression towards other nations, and consciously recognizes a direct responsibility for the common welfare of mankind. It is possible to cultivate this larger and only rational and moral view of the relations of nations to society at large without any danger of our nationalism being merged in the uninspiring intellectualism of the cosmopolite or the vague sentimentalism of the humanitarian, who, while professing to love all nations alike, so often succeeds in creating the impression that he loves other nations much better than his own. Voltaire defined patriotism as wishing other countries ill. A true and genuine patriotism will show charity, love—we need not be ashamed of the word—to all men; only one sect will be large enough for its sympathy, and that, as Oliver Wendell Holmes said, will be the human sect.

Who can doubt that one result of the war will be to give to the world a higher manhood and citizenship, a race of men larger in soul and mind, in vision and outlook? That will mean that everywhere the parochial view will more and more be replaced by the national,

the national view by the universal.<sup>1</sup> All improvement, however, must begin at home, and the highest service which it is within the power of this nation to render to the cause of permanent peace at the present time is to trouble less about the faults and shortcomings of other peoples and see to the removal of its own. Books have been written freely of late by versatile writers upon the "souls" of different nations—of Germany, of France, of Russia, of Italy, and the rest. What matters to us, however, is chiefly our own national soul, and more attention to it, and first of all a serious attempt to know it, is our urgent duty if the world is to make a new forward movement in public morality and we are to have our due share in its success.<sup>2</sup>

Future generations will perchance say of the people of Europe of the present day what was said of Dante as he walked the streets of his beloved Florence, "They went down into hell!" Tragic and lamentable would it be, however, if that were all they could say of the ordeal through which we are passing, and if the abyss of horror into which the world has been plunged still yawned, open-jawed, eager for further victims. To believe such a thing possible would be to question the sanity of the human race. We will believe rather that day

<sup>1</sup> "Whatever we may say amid the clash of arms and the din of preparation for warfare in time of peace—amidst all this there is going on a profound, mysterious movement that, whether we will or not, is bringing the nations of the civilized world, as well as the uncivilized, morally as well as physically nearer to one another, and making them more and more responsible before God for one another's welfare" (Mr. Gladstone, speech at Edinburgh in 1879: "Life of Gladstone," by Lord Morley, vol. ii., p. 596).

<sup>2</sup> An illustration of the censoriousness which draws upon this country the reproach of cant, even from foreign critics who are friendly to us, is afforded by a discussion on elementary education which took place at the final sitting of the House of Laymen for the Province of Canterbury on July 13, 1917. *The Times* of the following day reported: "Chancellor Smith pointed to the example of Germany as a warning of the danger of not putting religious instruction in a prominent place in a national system of education." It is probable that the German system of elementary education gives at least as much prominence to religion as the English, and in any case it has as little to do with the policy of the German Government and that of the high military command in the war as the use of rye bread as an article of diet.

by day the abyss is being filled up by the flesh and blood of many nations, as into its depths are swept by the tide of remorseless fate the hosts of combatants, friends and enemies, pitiless to each other as fighters, but gentle as men, those to whom war is a passion, a sport, a gamble, and those to whom it is sheer barbarity, only to be waged under an impelling sense of duty both to God and man. Said an old man to me recently, in a voice broken with emotion, "It is good to have lived in these days." Who does not feel that to be true? And yet our consciousness of the greatness of the time cannot diminish its horrors or absolve us from guilt, which we share with the other warring nations, that we have allowed the twentieth century of Christianity to witness the greatest crime against civilization in all history.

The war has made our old men young, but it has made our young men old. What thank-offering shall we bring to those who in this conflict have gone down into silence? Above all, what recompense shall we make when the war is over to the returning youth of the nations, which has been so cruelly hurried from the school to the shambles, compelled to take upon its shoulders a crushing load of responsibility, to face death before it has known life, to store up ineffaceable memories of nameless experiences, and to look henceforth upon the world with the eyes of premature age? Europe's sons have suffered for their fathers' shortcomings. Is not the thought one that should humiliate us to the dust? To them one recompense only is possible, and it is that we should give to them the assurance, or at least the hope, that it shall not be their lot, or the lot of the children who will live after them, to face another such catastrophe. As it is, the coming generations will be hardly punished by the debts which we shall bequeath to them as their share of the burden of the present war. For every mistake of policy made in the adjustment of the problems of the peace, however, they, with no responsibility at all, will have to pay the entire penalty, and the blessings or the curses of posterity will fall upon the memories

of the men who will decide these problems, according as they do it wisely or unwisely.<sup>1</sup>

This book has been written from the standpoint of the future and of the interests of generations still unborn. Who cares about the present and its immediate concerns? In all the questions connected with the coming settlement it is the future, and above all the distant future, that matters. Dare one hope that the settlement will be approached from that single standpoint? "England takes short views," was the judgment once passed upon the statecraft of this country by a competent foreign critic.<sup>2</sup> It is unfortunately true that England still far too often takes short views. There is so much in the national character and life that predisposes us to that fatal defect—our impatience of deep or exact thought, our excessive confidence in judgments that are purely intuitive, our contempt for any systematic and thorough grappling with our national problems, our incurable propensity for superficial generalizations, rough-and-ready solutions and short cuts, our want of imagination. The defect is perhaps even more encouraged by our very political system, of which we are justly proud, in that it teaches the statesman and the politician to be satisfied with the shallow success, lightly gained and lightly lost, that so surely rewards the dramatic surprise or the smart *coup*, to work for the present day and reap its applause, instead of patiently toiling for the future in silence and disregard, enjoying only by anticipation its recognition and its gratitude.

Never in our history, however, was there greater need than now that our statesmen should cultivate long and large views and wide perspectives, should think not in

<sup>1</sup> "Every step that you take (in foreign affairs) is an irretrievable one, and the consequences of your conduct are immediate and palpable. A false step in such a case cannot be retraced; you cannot, as you do on domestic questions, rescind your policy, calculate the loss you have sustained by the unwise system you have pursued, and console yourselves by thinking that for the future you will shun a policy proved to be injurious" (Mr. Disraeli, House of Commons, June, 1885).

<sup>2</sup> Pozzo di Borgo, Russian ambassador to Great Britain from 1837 to 1839, in a letter written from Paris to Count Nesselrode in 1814.

years but in generations and centuries, and in all their calculations should rise superior to petty interests and temptations to merely fugitive advantages. What knowledge, prescience, insight, imagination, what clarity of mind and freedom from prejudice, what understanding of and sympathy with human nature should be presumed in the men whose momentous task it will be to discuss and decide the problems of the coming peace, of which the solution, good or ill, will mould the history and determine the welfare not of one nation but of all Europe, perhaps of the whole world !

If throughout the preceding chapters Germany has seemed to be kept in the foreground, it has been unavoidable. We talk of the war, for form's sake, as one between the Allies and the Central Powers. Germany knows, and we and all the world know, that it is essentially a struggle between the British Empire and the German Empire, between British democracy and German autocracy, between British and German ideals, British and German notions of faith, honour, probity, morality, even religion. Our retaliationists admit this when they say that Germany must be crushed, and that when she has been crushed it must be the object of the settlement to keep her down, and render her impotent for further evil. No one is more convinced than I am of the necessity of prosecuting the war until Germany knows that she has lost and until, as a consequence of her failure, Europe will be able to breathe more freely and sleep more soundly than it has done for a generation. But let us not commit the mistake of confusing a victory of arms with a victory of ideals. Mere punishment has never made the criminal a better man ; too often it has simply brutalized him still more. Germany's false gods will not be supplanted by destroying their high priests or razing their altars to the ground. It will be done only by persuading and proving to the German nation that these gods are really false, and are powerless to help them or to do them good. The transformation and not the repression of Germany should be our desire. We cannot accomplish that work for her, but

we can encourage and support her own efforts in that direction.

The life of no European nation has been so egoistical and self-centred—not always, it is true, in a bad sense—as the life of the German nation during the past half-century. The cosmopolitan German of old is almost extinct; the modern German is interested only in his own country, and his sole ideal is its greater advancement in material and political power. But mankind is a great partnership. In that partnership some nations act fairly and others falsely; but no nation can find its true welfare altogether apart from the welfare of its neighbours. It should be our business to win Germany for a true comity of the nations, and not to rest until she walks abreast with the other civilized peoples of the world in the march of progress. Then

The common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

But if that is our hope and our aim we shall need to enter upon the settlement negotiations in a very different mood, and with very different purposes, from those of the retaliationists. Their policy would close the door to reconciliation, would perpetuate the spirit of war when war is over, and would re-establish still more firmly the very conditions which culminated in the present disaster. Germany, through her leading statesman and many of her better-known writers, has declared her willingness to co-operate in any arrangements which can be devised to assure the permanence of future peace. It would be folly to refuse to accept her co-operation, and drive her once more into a position of defiant isolation. Let Germany be won for the cause of universal peace and the cause itself will be won. Just as I believe profoundly that the German nation has already had more than enough of war and ardently longs for peace, so I believe that it will in the future be sincerely disposed to preserve peace, provided only that, from its standpoint, the peace is a reasonable one, and there-



fore, in President Wilson's words, "worth preserving"; not only so, but that with the overthrow of the present autocratic system of government the national will for peace would triumphantly assert itself.

If, on the other hand, we determine to meet Germany in a vindictive spirit, and succeed in forcing upon her terms destructive of her material interests, inconsistent with her just ambitions as a great nation, or humiliating to her pride, there can be no organization of the nations for the sublime purposes of peace; then the Congress of States or the Federation of Nations would neither deliberate nor meet nor yet be formed, for Germany, and perhaps with her Austria-Hungary, would refuse to join it.

A special responsibility rests upon Great Britain in this matter, and I do not apologize for again emphasizing it. Partly this responsibility is of her own creating, but far more it is imposed upon her by the facts of history and of the present situation. The interests of this country coincide as do those of no Continental Power with those of Europe in general. We want nothing at all in Europe except the establishment of such a status as will ensure the public peace against future disturbance; we need seek nothing in the whole world that could conflict with that paramount object. The more this country is ready to put in the background all thought of advantage, the greater will be the likelihood that the settlement will prove stable and permanent. Canning once compared England to Eolus, holding the winds in chains. It is no exaggeration of her influence to say that that is now her position in relation to the coming settlement.

But some people may ask, What shall the war profit us if we fail to keep the newly-gained territories and so extend further the sway of the British Crown? O fools and blind, who do not see that the highest and worthiest profit is ours already! For when has Great Britain stood higher in the esteem of the nations, when have her reputation and honour shone with a brighter lustre, than since the month of August, 1914? To have

gained the approbation of her own conscience and of the world at large by striking a blow for right and championing the weak against the strong—that is her reward. We have flung at Germany a thousand times during the last three years the challenge, “What shall it profit a nation if it gain the whole world and lose its own soul?” This country dare not itself be a backslider from the principles and pledges with which it entered the war. Of what value are claims and rights or advantages of any kind, if by forgoing them we can better serve the cause of civilization, humanity, and morality? Let young nations think of rights and old nations of duties. There are rights which can be put to the best use by sacrificing them, and such a right is the right of conquest—the right to keep the territories which we have wrested from the enemy by superior force. By making such a sacrifice we should reap first the inner reward of renunciation; but more, there would stand to our credit the greater reward of securing to other nations the blessings which our renunciation would have purchased.

It may be said that the world is not yet run on such altruistic principles. It is true, and that is why the world is to-day in the midst of a conflict so ruthless and terrible that it almost seems at times like the doom of civilization. But Great Britain's entrance into the conflict was justified, and justified only, by the plea that the world must be run on these principles and no others, if its future course is no longer to be marked by a merely fluctuating progress, by little advances followed by big retreats, by uncertain victories ever again neutralized by reverses:

Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good,  
And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in the mud.

No territorial advantages which we could wrest as a prize of the war would compensate the nation for any departure from the path of strictest honour and rectitude, or for violence done to its new-born idealism. Still to-day

the greatest of British interests are Britain's faith and her reputation for probity amongst the nations. Let her withhold her hand, and she will reap rich recompense for poverty of material gains in increased moral influence. It will be a proud day for the British nation—one of the proudest in its history—if when the settlement of Europe is completed, and the world is free to resume its broken course, it shall be possible for the spokesman of British policy in Parliament to repeat the words which Lord Castlereagh used in the same place a hundred years ago, when defending the action of this country in connection with the great settlement made at the Congress of Vienna.

The conduct of Great Britain (he said) has been vindicated : it has been proved that she entered the war from nothing short of an overruling necessity ; and that she was ready to relinquish everything of which, for her own security, she had been obliged to take possession, as soon as it became manifest that she could make that sacrifice without danger.

There is a further reason why this country should use her position of comparative detachment to ensure that the conditions of peace, while exacting due reparation for the wrong which it has done, shall not leave the German nation rancorous, implacable, and inspired with thoughts of revenge. For two generations Great Britain has never been altogether right with Germany. The faults have by no means been all on one side, and this is neither the time nor the place to apportion responsibility, even if in regard to some of the causes of misunderstanding all the facts necessary for a fair and impartial judgment were yet accessible, which is not the case. The political relationships of one nation with another are not determined by the nations themselves, but, in each case, by the small section of people who constitute what are called the ruling classes, and in the last resort by the handful of men who determine official policy, and often the attitude of these minute fractions of the population does not faithfully reflect the attitude of the nation itself. German national sentiment towards this country

has been notoriously misrepresented owing to this cause in recent years,<sup>1</sup> just as in the past British sentiment towards Germany has sometimes been misrepresented in the same way.

No one who has carefully studied the official relationships of the two countries from the time when the German unity movement entered the sphere of practical action, in the middle of last century, will doubt that the overwhelmingly unsympathetic attitude towards that movement of British statesmen, whose leanings towards Austria and France caused them to bestow a cold and often contemptuous regard upon the neighbour of both of these countries, was the beginning of an untoward tradition which, like all the traditions of our foreign policy, has shown singular tenacity and vitality. This tradition received more formal endorsement in the early part of the unhappy colonial controversies of 1884 and 1885, when the Government of the day refused, until Bismarck masterfully took the law into his own hands, to recognize the right of the young and ambitious German Empire to a share in the unappropriated parts of the African continent. The incidents of that period contained the germ of all later misunderstandings; even the Morocco controversies of 1905 to 1911 can only be properly appreciated in so far as the events of twenty years before are kept in mind. With such warnings before us it will be an irreparable disaster if, now that the two countries are compelled once more to decide on a new orientation of foreign policy, and in so doing to adjust afresh their relationships as colonial Powers, the influence of Great Britain were to be cast on the side of a settlement which would make inevitable a perpetual antagonism.

But, further, to oppose violent, and therefore short-

<sup>1</sup> This was a common complaint of the popular parties almost down to the eve of war. Thus the *Frankfurter Zeitung* wrote on January 5, 1912, "Professions that the German nation is peaceably minded make no impression in Great Britain, since the English answer us, 'We are glad to believe it, but the German nation does not make German policy. Its policy is made in a quarter which is absolute, irresponsible, and incalculable, and for that reason we attach merely a platonic and never a practical value to the national (official) professions of peace.' What answer are we to make to that?"

sighted, solutions of the most delicate and complicated problem that has ever engaged European statesmanship is the paramount duty of Great Britain if she would be true to one of the best traditions of her history. No other country could discharge with greater right than she the function of the moderator and conciliator of conflicting claims. More than once in recent years she has filled that position with credit to herself and with benefit to Europe and the cause of peace. It was Great Britain who after the Crimean War held Louis Napoleon in check, with the result that both of the allies came out of that exhausting enterprise with empty hands. Pre-eminently it was the position which she occupied at the Congress of Vienna a hundred years ago, when, after passing through an agony like in cause though not in kind to that of the present day, Europe was in process of transformation. France was then the tyrant of the Continent, and Germany suffered most at her hands. When Prussia, delirious with the desire for revenge, would have torn her enemy limb from limb, it was Great Britain who interposed and succeeded in bringing about a settlement which gave no Power all that it wanted yet left behind no ineffaceable memories of bitterness and humiliation.

To-day the rôles of aggressor and victim are reversed, and now, in the expectation of victory, it is in France that the loudest calls for the dismemberment of her adversary are raised. Shall it not fall to Great Britain to perform for Europe once more the invaluable service which she rendered a century ago? The part of the peacemaker may be blessed, but it is usually thankless and often hazardous, and seldom is gratitude rendered by those from whom it is most justly due. Prussia, indeed, did not for a long time forgive this country for having robbed her of the full spoils of victory in 1815, though in restraining her cupidity Great Britain was her truest friend. Yet the risk is worth running; and if the thanks should be long withheld, or never be given at all, what matter? This is a work for mankind and the future, and a great and ancient nation can afford to labour without reward. Never has the

moral reputation of Great Britain amongst the nations stood higher than since the day, now nearly three years ago, when she came forward, renouncing all thought of interest and advantage, as the champion of the great principles of right and right dealing. That reputation is a call and a challenge that she who has warred so well shall also seek peace well, giving neither support nor countenance to any ignoble policy of vindictive retaliation unworthy of her lustrous past and her generous present.

In taking such a stand America will be on her side—helpfully, loyally, enthusiastically.<sup>1</sup> Acting together and inspired by the same unselfish motives, these two great democracies, mother and daughter, will have it in their power to render not only to afflicted Europe, but to the highest interests of civilization and humanity, a service of unexampled benefit. They will not strive in vain, for with them will be the auxiliaries of morality and progress everywhere, one with them in calling the world to a new start and a better day.

For the heart and the mind  
 And the voice of mankind  
 Will arise in communion :  
 And who shall resist that proud union ?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquests and no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves and no material compensation for sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind, and shall be satisfied when those rights are as secure as fact and the freedom of nations can make them" (President Wilson's message to Congress, April 2, 1917).

<sup>2</sup> Byron, "Ode from the French."

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF EVENTS

- 1648** Treaty of Westphalia (ending the Thirty Years' War) under which France obtained Alsace.
- 1772** First partition of Poland.
- 1793** Second partition of Poland.
- 1795** Third partition of Poland.
- 1803** England declares war against France (May 12th).
- 1804** The Serbians were the first of the Balkan nations to rise against Turkish rule.
- 1814** First Peace of Paris (May 30th).  
Congress of Vienna for the settlement of Europe after the fall of Napoleon (September to June, 1815).
- 1815** Constitution of the Germanic Federation (June); first meeting, November, 1816; last meeting, August, 1866.  
Second Peace of Paris (November 20th).
- 1817** Turkey granted autonomy to Serbia.
- 1823** Promulgation by President Monroe of the doctrine bearing his name in a message to the American Congress (December 2nd).
- 1828-9** War between Russia and Turkey, ended by Peace of Adrianople (September 14, 1829) by which Turkey recognized the independence of Greece and the wider autonomy of Serbia.
- 1830** Turkey acknowledged a hereditary Prince of Serbia.
- 1837** Hanover separated from England.
- 1839** Belgian treaty of neutrality and independence concluded (April 19th), signed by Great Britain, France, Prussia, Austria, and Russia.
- 1848** Revolutions in France and Germany (March); progress of constitutionalism in Germany.  
Convocation of the Frankfort Parliament of all Germany (May to June, 1849).  
Hungarian revolution (September to September, 1849).
- 1848-9** Prusso-Danish War; integrity of Denmark guaranteed by the Powers by the London Protocol of 1850.

- 1849 Frederick William IV of Prussia declined the imperial crown (April).
- 1850 Prussia received a constitution.
- 1853 Russo-Turkish (Crimean) War; Great Britain and France entered on the side of Turkey in March, 1854; war lasted until the end of 1855.
- 1856 Treaty of Paris (March 30th) concluding the Crimean War: the Powers guaranteed the integrity of the Turkish Empire, Russia ceded Bessarabia, and the Black Sea was interdicted to ships of war.
- 1859 France and Piedmont at war with Austria (April to July); Austria ceded Lombardy to Piedmont.
- 1861 Kingdom of Italy proclaimed (March).  
The Danubian principalities (Wallachia and Moldavia) united as Roumania (December), still subject to Turkey.
- 1864 War of Prussia and Austria against Denmark on the Schleswig-Holstein question (January to June); concluded by the Peace of Vienna (October 30th), Denmark ceding the two duchies to these States, which for a time exercised a condominium therein.
- 1866 War between Prussia and Austria, Italy fighting on Prussia's side (June and July); concluded by the Treaty of Prague (August), Austria agreeing to the dissolution of the Germanic Federation and a new organization of Germany from which she was to be excluded, ceding Venetia to Italy, and abandoning her rights in Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia, which also annexed four German States.
- 1867 *Ausgleich* or Compromise concluded between Austria and Hungary on the basis of a Dual Monarchy (February); the Emperor Francis Joseph crowned in Budapest (June).  
Serbia became virtually independent.  
Formation of North German Confederation.  
Treaty concluded by the Powers guaranteeing the neutrality of Luxemburg (May); Great Britain wanted "recognition" only, but Prussia insisted upon a collective guarantee.
- 1870 Franco-German War (July to January, 1871); by the Treaty of Frankfort (May 10, 1871) France ceded to Germany Alsace and a part of Lorraine, and agreed to pay an indemnity of £200,000,000. At the beginning of the war Great Britain concluded separate



- agreements with the belligerent Powers by which they undertook to observe the Belgian and Luxemburg treaties of neutrality, Great Britain to defend them with all her forces in case of violation by either Power. Italian army entered Rome (September).  
 Russia denounces the Black Sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris (October).
- 1871** Proclamation of the German Empire at Versailles (January).
- 1872** Conclusion of the *rapproch* (commonly called alliance) of the three Emperors, i.e. of Germany, Russia, and Austria (September).
- 1875** Threatened attack by Germany upon France averted by the interposition of the Czar of Russia.
- 1877** War broke out between Russia and Turkey (April), following insurrections in the Balkans consequent on Turkish misrule, and lasted until March, 1878. Roumania declared independent (May).
- 1878** Berlin Congress on the Eastern Question (June and July). By the Treaty of Berlin (July 13th) Russia acquired part of Bessarabia, which she lost in 1856; Austria empowered to occupy but not to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria created an autonomous principality, Prince Alexander of Battenberg being the first ruler; and Serbia, Montenegro, and Roumania declared independent. By a secret treaty with Turkey Great Britain acquired Cyprus.
- 1879** Germany and Austria-Hungary entered into a military alliance (October 7th).  
 Germany went over to Protection.
- 1881** Roumania became a kingdom.  
 Murder of Czar Alexander II; succeeded by Alexander III.  
 France occupied Tunis.
- 1882** Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy formed (May).  
 British occupation of Egypt, following military insurrection in Alexandria.
- 1884** Germany acquired her first colonies in Africa and the Pacific; other acquisitions made in 1885.  
 Congo Conference held in Berlin, resulting in the Congo Act of February 26, 1885.  
 Secret "reinsurance" treaty concluded between Germany and Russia.

- 1885 Reunion of Bulgaria with Roumelia (September).  
War between Serbia and Bulgaria (November); Serbia defeated; peace signed at Bucharest, March, 1886.  
Triple Alliance renewed.
- 1886 Prince Alexander of Bulgaria carried off by conspirators (August) and abdicated (September); Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg invited to succeed him and elected in July, 1887, against the passive protest of the Powers.
- 1888 Death of the Emperors William I (March) and Frederick III (June) of Germany; accession of William II
- 1889 Abdication of Prince Milan of Serbia; accession of Alexander.
- 1890 Resignation of Prince Bismarck (March); General von Caprivi becomes German Imperial Chancellor.  
Abandonment by Germany of the Russo-German secret treaty of 1884.  
Colonial convention concluded between Great Britain and Germany (July) by which the former ceded Heligoland in return for East African territory.
- 1891 First steps towards a Franco-Russian *entente*.  
Renewal of Triple Alliance.
- 1894 Death of Czar Alexander III; succeeded by Nicholas II.  
War between Japan and China; concluded by treaty of April 17, 1895.
- 1895 Conclusion of Franco-Russian alliance.  
Opening of the Kiel Canal.
- 1896 The German Emperor's telegram to President Kruger.
- 1897 Germany acquired Kiaochow from China.  
Admiral Tirpitz became Germany's Minister of Marine.
- 1898 First German Navy Law passed (March).  
Colonel Marchand's Nile expedition reached Fashoda (September), but on the instructions of the French Government withdrew.  
German Emperor's visit to the Sultan at Constantinople and to Palestine (October).  
First Peace Conference of The Hague convened by the Czar of Russia (December).
- 1899 Boer War began (October) with hostilities by the Transvaal and the Orange Free State; concluded with the Peace of Vereeniging, May 28, 1902.
- 1901 Death of Queen Victoria (January); accession of Edward VII.

- 1902** Conclusion of Anglo-Japanese alliance (renewed August, 1905).  
Renewal of Triple Alliance.
- 1903** Revolution in Belgrade; murder of King Alexander of Serbia and Queen Draga; accession of Peter I.
- 1904** War between Russia and Japan; concluded by the Peace of Portsmouth (U.S.A.), August, 1905.  
Conclusion of Anglo-French agreement regarding Egypt, and Morocco by the Government of Mr. A. J. Balfour (Lord Lansdowne, Foreign Secretary), the origin of the *Entente* (April).
- 1905** German Emperor intervened in Morocco, visiting Tangier (March); as a result the Conference of Algeciras was convened and met in September; resignation of M. Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, under German pressure.  
Renewal of Anglo-Japanese alliance (August).  
First "Dreadnought" laid down (October).
- 1906** First Russian Duma convened (May to July).
- 1907** Anglo-Russian Convention defining spheres of influence in Persia concluded (August); therewith the *Triple Entente* consummated.  
Second Peace Conference of The Hague.
- 1908** Revolution of Young Turks in Constantinople (July).  
Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, and simultaneously Bulgaria proclaimed her independence (October).
- 1909** Conclusion of treaty by which Germany recognized the preferential position of France in Morocco (February).  
Death of Leopold II of Belgium (December); accession of King Albert.  
Victory of reaction in Constantinople.  
Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg succeeded Prince Bülow as German Imperial Chancellor.
- 1910** Death of Edward VII (May); accession of George V.
- 1911** German gunboat *Panther* visited Agadir in Morocco (June); new Morocco treaty concluded between Germany and France by which the former formally recognized a French protectorate, Germany receiving territorial compensation in the French Congo region.  
Renewal of the Anglo-Japanese treaty of alliance.  
Tripoli war between Italy and Turkey (October).

- 1912** Lord Haldane's visit to Berlin (February).  
 Formation of the Balkan League.  
 First Balkan war, October, ending with the Treaty of London, May 17, 1913, never ratified.  
 Italy occupied Tripoli.
- 1913** Second Balkan war, ending with the Treaties of Bucharest (August 10th) and Constantinople (September 29th).  
 Passing of German Defence Law, authorizing the special expenditure of £50,000,000 on military preparations; France and Russia answered with Army Laws.
- 1914** Murder of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, the Duchess of Hohenberg, at Serajevo, capital of Bosnia (June 28th).  
 Austrian ultimatum served on Serbian Government (July 23rd).  
 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia (July 28th).  
 General mobilization by Russia (July 31st), France and Germany (August 1st); state of war between these three Powers.  
 German armies invaded Luxemburg and France (August 2nd) and Belgium (August 4th). Great Britain was regarded as at war with Germany as from August 4th, but declared war upon Austria-Hungary only on August 12th. Later, Italy, Roumania, with Japan and Portuguese in virtue of their alliances with Great Britain, and in 1917 the United States joined the Entente Powers; while Turkey and Bulgaria joined the Central Powers.

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